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Features

10

The Enduring Mystery of Amelia Earhart by Gerry Bruder

A half-century after America's premier woman flier disappeared in the South Pacific, her fate remains aviation's most perplexing—and fascinating—enigma.

20

Philadelphia/1787 by Harold Holzer

The host city for the Constitutional Convention was the largest, most cosmopolitan, and progressive in America, but it was not without its share of problems.

26

Philadelphia/1987

Many of the sites frequented by delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1787 can still be visited today.

34

Spanning the Golden Gate by Richard Dillon

Fifty years ago, undaunted by skepticism and a formidable engineering challenge, Joseph Baermann Strauss accomplished what most had considered an "impossible dream."

46

Joyce Kilmer by Brian McGinty

The author of "Trees" not only wrote about, but served and died valorously in World War I.

Departments

4 Mailbox

6 Sight & Sound

8 History Bookshelf



Cover

California's Golden Gate Bridge, here veiled in fog, was nothing more than a vision in the mind of its designer, Joseph Baermann Strauss, a little more than a half-century ago. Skeptics thought spanning the mile-plus-wide entrance to San Francisco Bay an impossible prospect. Opponents feared a bridge would detract from the landscape. But Strauss disproved them all with his graceful structure. The bridge marks its fiftieth anniversary this month.

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Ostrich Cavalry?

Stanley Kramer's Camel Cavalry article [March 1987 issue] illustrates one of the frontier Army's more unique efforts at adapting new "equipment." Yet another example occurred twenty years later when Major Gordon Bryce, a retired British officer, proposed replacement of the horse with ostriches. That rather bizarre scheme is chronicled in the *Army-Navy Journal* of August 2, 1879. The article reads in part: "By the substitution of ostriches for horses and adopting, perhaps, the Indian fashion of leading an extra bird relief, Major Bryce thinks that our cavalry could dispense entirely with forage trains, and could march as far and as fast as the Indians . . . with no more supplies of food and drink than each man's haversack and canteen would carry."

The scheme was presented to the secretary of war whose final disposition on it is unknown. A conclusion to this whole episode comes from the above-mentioned article: "I need not enlarge upon the moral effect which the appearance of a regiment of ostrich cavalry would produce upon the hostile savages of the plains, or even upon the more civilized Mexicans. Major Bryce, with the bluntness of an old soldier, says, 'Damme, sir: it would be prodigious.'

"We feel obliged to enroll ourselves amongst the skeptics, in this matter; but it is a wonderful age that we live in, and who shall say that before many years some of the graduates of the Military Academy may be assigned to the First Ostriches?"

William McKale
Museum Specialist
U.S. Cavalry Museum
Fort Riley, Kansas

He Knew J.L.G. Ferris

It was of great interest and nostalgia that I read the story of J.L.G. Ferris in the February 1987 issue of *American History Illustrated*.

In 1928, as a fifteen-year-old art apprentice in Philadelphia, I first met Mr. Ferris. I was employed by the Ketterlinus Lithographing Co., at that time one of America's leading lithographers and printers. They were located at 4th and Arch streets, just a block away from the final rest-

ing place of Benjamin and Deborah Franklin. Very close by are Independence Hall, Carpenters' Hall, the Betsy Ross House, and indeed many other national treasures.

It was one of my duties there to greet visiting free-lance artists on the ground floor (the art department being on the eighth) and assist in carrying their paintings to the elevator and then into the art director's office. I remember the awe in which I regarded these painters. After unwrapping a painting, I would place it on an easel to await the art director's scrutiny.

Mr. Ferris's work, quite naturally, centered on early American themes of historic importance. His work was used for the production of calendars used by insurance and banking firms. What treasures they were! It was the golden age of exquisite printing, in perfect register on museum quality stock.

Mr. Ferris was a lean, rather austere-looking man. But his manner belied all that. He was a gentle person who spoke in a soft, well-modulated manner. Other well known artists of the day who free-lanced for the Ketterlinus Company were pastelists Bradshaw Crandall, Arthur William Brown, Peter Hurd, and Stanley M. Arthurs, the latter also noted for his paintings of historic renown.

Now, nearing age seventy-four, I often roll back the years to that time when in my boy's hands I was privileged to hold some of the great paintings of our time.

I am still actively painting, and recall the cardinal rule emphasized by all of those great men: Good drawing was the bedrock of it all.

James Pearl
Frederick, Maryland

Civil Rights Pioneer Dies

I thought that you might want to know that Mr. E. D. Nixon, the father of the civil rights movement, died February 25, 1987, of natural causes. He was eighty-seven.

Richard Blake Dent
Birmingham, Alabama

Richard Blake Dent's article on E. D. Nixon and the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott of 1955 appeared in the December 1985 issue of American History Illustrated.

Mailbox

Donner Tragedy

The January 1987 issue of *American History Illustrated* "Mailbox" contains a letter from a gentleman in Michigan who asks if the Donner fate was avoidable. I am not qualified to answer that question. I do, however, have some additional data that may be helpful:

The modern version of the Donner Tragedy was written by George S. Stewart, entitled *Ordeal by Hunger*. First published in 1936 and updated in 1960, this volume by a distinguished professor at the University of California, Berkeley, is both scholarly and readable and has the advantage of being written by one who covered every mile of the Donner Trail in California and western Nevada by foot or by car. The United States government thought so much of Dr. Stewart's contributions to western Americana that it recently named a peak in his honor. The peak is located north of Donner Peak and Interstate 80.

Additionally, the Nevada Emigrant Trail Committee, Inc., Reno,

has published a booklet entitled *A Guide to the Overland Emigrant Trail to California* that lists the location of the seventy-one markers cemented into place by the Committee and identifies the three basic routes into California: Humboldt River route, Truckee River route, and Carson River route. The booklet is available at the Donner Lake State Park, Truckee, California.

To my mind there were three basic reasons for the Donner tragedy:

The snowfall during October/November 1846 was unusually heavy. Had the Donner party attempted to climb the pass during a winter such as we experienced in October/November 1986, it would not have had any difficulty.

The members of the Donner Party were farmers, and they were traveling without a guide. Had they been sufficiently forewarned they would not have wasted valuable time in and around Truckee Meadows (now Reno), but would have fled westward and possibly avoided the early snows. The fact that they were unacquainted with mountain weather and

its sudden changeability led materially to the tragedy.

The accident to George Donner's hand and his subsequent death at the Donner Family Camp near Alder Creek some nine miles northeast of Donner Lake robbed the party of its presumed leader and hastened its dissolution.

In closing, it is important to note that there appear to be no final answers to the tragedy of the Donner Party, which was the single greatest reversal of the fortunes of the westward movement. A unique set of circumstances marred the trail of this intrepid party.

James A. Doubleday
Citrus Heights, California

American History Illustrated welcomes comments from our readers. While we endeavor to publish a representative sampling of this correspondence, we regret that limited space prevents us from printing every letter. Address correspondence to The Mailbox, American History Illustrated, Box 8200, Harrisburg, PA 17105. ★

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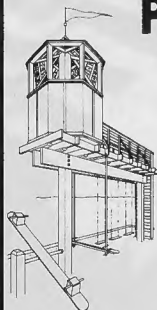
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Conquest (*Promotions Plus*, 6730 North St., Dept NP121, Tinley Park, IL 60477; VHS or Beta videocassette, MP1196, 180 minutes, \$59.95).

Since man's documented history began, he has looked to the heavens and longed to reach out to the stars. This two-tape video, divided into three sections, brilliantly narrates the history of man's achievements in outer space from primitive turn-of-the-century blueprints created by a Russian teacher to Goddard, von Braun, and other early engineers of rocket propulsion to Skylab and the most recent shuttles. When the world's first liquid fuel missile, the V-2 rocket, was launched in the closing months of World War II, man was less than two decades from walking on the moon. By 1961 Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin was earth's "first cosmic ambassador," followed by American astronaut Sheppard. Then-President John F. Kennedy announced to a stunned world that the United States would land a man on the moon before the decade was out, and the space race was on. Most interesting is the rare footage from the Russian space program. Magnificent panoramic shots of earth and of the astronauts and capsules in space tantalize the imagination; artists' renderings are skillfully blended with actual photography to illustrate some of the "futuristic" segments of the narrative. Included are reports on space ventures by countries other than Russia and America. There are also features on satellites and their many uses: communications, environment and storm warning systems, and planetary/outer space study. The historic docking of the American *Apollo* with the Russian *Soyuz* is depicted with historic footage. The final segment of the video discusses commercial opportunities presented by shuttle-type spacecraft, as well as threats to mankind when rocketry is used as a weapon. Spacelab is seen as a means of revolutionizing the way mankind views science, renewing in space opportunities lost on earth. One need not be a "Trekkie" to enjoy this unique audiovisual history of man's love affair with outer space.

Fighter Aces of WWII (*The Minnesota Studio*, 430 Oak Grove Street, Suite 222, Minneapolis, MN 55403; 48 minutes, color and black/white, VHS format, 1986; \$29.95 plus shipping costs).

The story of "the last of the gun-fighters" is told by four members of the 357th Fighter Group who recount their experiences as P-51 Mustang ace pilots fighting the Luftwaffe during World War II. The four fighter pilots interviewed—Colonel Clarence Anderson, Captain William O'Brien, Major Richard Peterson, and General Thomas Hayes—were teenagers looking for adventure, glamour, and fame as fighter aces (pilots who had five-plus "kills" to their credit) when they enlisted. They found all three but also discovered that in order to survive they had to develop a killer instinct. After training in the United States, the 357th Fighter Group was ordered to England in 1943. The men traveled by ocean liner, one recalling that he was billeted in the honeymoon suite with seventeen other men. Once in England, the new pilots entered the war. These World War II "Top Guns" freely acknowledge the kill-or-be-killed nature of their job; one compares a dogfight to a knife-fight in an alley. Yet the men seem to hold the enemy in high esteem. One fighter ace recounts with delight and respect how after a prolonged and difficult battle, the Luftwaffe pilot was forced to bail out of his destroyed plane and, while calmly freefalling, he saluted the American before pulling his ripcord and safely floating to earth. The stories the pilots tell are accompanied by spectacular black-and-white (and some color) gun-camera film footage of dogfights. There is also footage of the bases, the barracks, the ready-rooms, and the pilots both on duty and at ease. The film concentrates on the voices and visual images, while the music is quiet and low-key. Those with an interest in World War II, particularly veterans, will find this videotape a fascinating series of reminiscences by a heroic group of men. ★

Mailbox

Camel Footnote

I have just received my March 1987 issue of *American History Illustrated* and the article by A. Stanley Kramer about the Camel Cavalry is one of the best I have seen yet.

With a quick glance at a Texas map you will see that Camp Verde is only a few miles from my home town of Kerrville and there are a number of us who are interested in the Camel history . . . [and] who are interested in having a museum at the site . . .

Incidentally there are two small footnotes to the article that Mr. Kramer should know about. One that Robert E. Lee was once stationed at Camp Verde (War Department files) and the other is that one of the camel drovers wandered off to Mexico to live and married a Mexican lady and one of his grandchildren, Portes Gil, became president of Mexico.

William G. Stacy
Kerrville, Texas

Franklin Confined When?

I read with fascination "The Prodigal Son" by John M. Taylor [March 1987 issue]. According to *A Little Revenge* by Willard Randall, William Franklin was ordered confined outside of the colony of New Jersey on about June 20, 1776. . . . On June 26 he was ordered to Connecticut, and on July 4, 1776, as his father read proofs of the Declaration of Independence, William was being processed through the Connecticut War Office. After trying to stall the proceedings, William signed his parole and was sent to Wallingford, where he was a paying guest-prisoner. From there he was moved to Middletown, where he secretly gathered intelligence for the British and plotted against the rebels. In March 1777 William was investigated for Loyalist activities. In April 1777, not 1776, the unanimous decision for indefinite solitary confinement was issued against William.

Yours is my favorite magazine, and I read it cover-to-cover each issue.

Jean K. Potratz
Janesville, Iowa

Jean Potratz is indeed correct—the date should have been April 1777. We regret this error. ★

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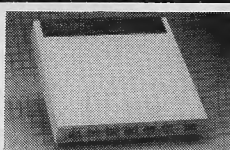
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Jessie Benton Frémont: A Biography by Pamela Herr (*Franklin Watts, New York, 1987; 496 pages, \$24.95*).

Nineteenth-century America was richly endowed with heroes, but heroines were a scarce commodity. Marked by an expanding frontier, great political issues, and the challenges of the Civil War, the era encouraged larger-than-life exploits by men of ability but ruthlessly limited women to supporting roles. Pamela Herr's biography of Jessie Benton Frémont is a fascinating volume filled with psychological insights. The book tells the story of a talented, complex, strong-willed woman who at first rebelled against the unwritten rules of Victorian society, then reluctantly adapted to them to legitimize her ambitions and energy. The favorite daughter of fiery Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton, Jessie was "given the place a son would have had in her father's heart." A precocious child, she was by age five accompanying her father to the White House, where she sat at President Andrew Jackson's knee. At age sixteen she met the second great influence in her life—twenty-six-year-old engineer/explorer John Charles Frémont. A year later, risking the wrath of Senator Benton, Jessie and the dashing army officer were secretly wed; it was the beginning of a passionate, life-long romance. For the next fifty years, Jessie channeled her ambitions into her husband's career: she played a major role in writing Frémont's official reports of his expeditions to the West; ardently supported him during the court-martial that followed his ill-fated third expedition; faithfully followed him to the West Coast at the height of the gold rush in 1849; involved herself in California politics and later as Senator Frémont's wife in Washington; campaigned fervently for Frémont during his presidential effort in 1856; and, as a writer, did much to support the family during later years of poverty. With good reason, Herr points out, Jessie liked to quote the lines from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*: "I grant I am a woman but . . . think you I am no stronger than my sex, being so father'd and so husbanded?" Herr convinces the reader

that, had Jessie been born a male (or, perhaps, lived in a more receptive time) she would have become a noted politician, soldier, or explorer. As it was, she became one of the most extraordinary women of her time. It is surprising that such an important figure has not previously been the subject of a serious biography, but Pamela Herr has set matters aright. Long obscured in the shadow of her famous but controversial husband, an American heroine at last receives the recognition due her in this important volume.

Henry Thoreau: A Life in the Mind by Robert D. Richardson, Jr., designed and illustrated by Barry Moser (*University of California Press, Berkeley, 1986; 455 pages, illustrated, \$25.00*).

The name Henry David Thoreau brings to mind Walden Pond and the Concord jail. Yet this remarkable nineteenth-century intellectual led an amazingly diverse life, from his emergence out of mentor/friend Emerson's shadow to his study of the Greek and Roman Stoics, Goethe, Darwin, and contemporary nature writers. Richardson re-examines not just the author of *Walden* but seeks to demonstrate the balance between Thoreau's outdoor and intellectual lives, as well as his personal life. This comprehensive intellectual biography examines the minute details of Thoreau's life from 1837, when he graduated from college, until his death in 1862. "My main purpose," says Richardson, "has been to give an account of the development of Thoreau as a writer, a naturalist, and a reader." Handsomely designed and illustrated.

Captain Kidd and the War against the Pirates by Robert C. Ritchie (*Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1986; 320 pages, illustrated, \$20.00*).

The name Captain Kidd conjures up images of swashbuckling pirates and adventures on the high seas during the height of the seventeenth-century colonizing era. Less known are the origins of piracy and how and why it became so romanticized in the public mind despite its criminal nature. In this book, history professor Robert C. Ritchie examines the economic

and political forces that allowed, in fact prompted, piracy to develop. Governments that found it too expensive to maintain a peacetime navy encouraged piracy. Ritchie focuses on the career of the infamous William Kidd, whose most famous voyage to Madagascar in 1696 was sponsored by some of the most powerful political figures in England. But when the influence of these Whig leaders waned, the once-supportive merchants and shipowners joined the navy in opposing and prosecuting Kidd and other buccaneers. Kidd's notorious activities eventually garnered him a stay in Newgate prison and a swing from the gallows. Ritchie explores men such as Kidd who became pirates—why they chose that occupation, what their lives were like aboard pirate ships, who governed them, and what caused their ultimate downfall: "When [colonial merchants] eventually became established, the[y] found the rough ways of the pirates too high a price to pay and turned against the buccaneers, but for nearly a century they provided sanctuary."

Passage: From Sail to Steam by L.R.W. Beavis edited by M.S. Kline with a foreword by Basil Lubbock (*University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1986; 224 pages, illustrated, \$32.95*).

British-born sea captain L.R.W. Beavis's maritime career began in 1876 and continued through the 1920s. Beavis kept detailed logs and journals of his adventures, further documenting them with nearly two thousand photographs. During his retirement years he penned a manuscript about his life at sea, from his first experiences at age twelve aboard the British training ship H.M.S. *Conway* to his apprenticeship aboard *Star of France*, and his rise from third mate to master of the *Micronesia*. After his beloved *Micronesia* burned in 1897, Beavis sadly turned from sailing ships to steamers, explaining that in "talking things over with my girl [his wife May], I found she did not wish me to go again on these long voyages . . . Much as I hated steam kettles, I decided there was nothing else to

do." Captain Beavis's continuing maritime career carried him through World War I in the Canadian Hydrographic Survey Service and later to Siberia for the Hudson's Bay Company. His logs and journals reflect the times in which he traveled and lived, placing him at the scene of many historic events during the eras of sail and steam. Beavis's love of photography (nicely displayed in this oversize volume) made him an artful recorder of events, while his colorful seafaring jargon and sense of humor make this narrative lively and entertaining.

Touched by Fire: A Photographic Portrait of the Civil War, Volume Two edited by William C. Davis with photographic consultation by William A. Frassanito (*The National Historical Society and Little, Brown and Company, Boston and Toronto, 1987; 332 pages, illustrated, \$50.00*).

This second volume of rare Civil War photographs culminates a two-part project of the National Historical Society to print many previously unpublished images of the most bitter and costly war on American soil. Volume One was published in the fall of 1985 and was widely praised for its originality and quality. The second volume contains a portrait of "Billy Yank" similar to the treatment of "Johnny Reb" in Volume One, as well as a microcosmic view of the war and its daily course as experienced in a Yankee camp in occupied Kentucky. Civil War historian and author or editor of twenty books dealing with the war and southern history, William Davis once again brings this great conflict to life.

"Just what was the nature of the two governments that waged war upon one another? Where were their ideologies divergent, and how did they reflect the aspirations of the peoples who supported them? . . . what of the role of minorities in this war?" asks Davis in his introduction. Answers to these—and many more intriguing questions appear in these images that will add much to the already-vast wealth of Civil War material. ★

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· A half-century after America's premier woman flier disappeared in the South Pacific, her fate remains aviation's most perplexing—and fascinating—enigma.

The Enduring Mystery of Amelia Earhart

by Gerry Bruder

THEY MUST HAVE started to squirm long before they realized they were in trouble. Amelia Earhart in the cockpit and Fred Noonan at his navigator's station in the cabin behind her probably felt the first cramps several hours after takeoff from Lae, New Guinea. It was July 2, 1937, and the two aviators were on the longest leg of a round-the-world flight. After ten hours in the noisy, vibrating Lockheed Electra, they probably found that stretching and shifting in their seats no longer relieved their muscles.

By the nineteenth or twentieth hour, however, physical discomfort had become inconsequential. Now Earhart and Noonan squirmed for a different reason. They had flown more than 2,500 miles, and their destination, Howland Island, should have been visible on the horizon. The pair searched the vast Pacific Ocean for a glimpse of the treeless, half-mile-wide, twenty-foot-high isle. Cloud shadows on the water may have exasperated them.

"We must be on you but cannot see you," Earhart radioed around the twentieth hour to the Coast Guard cutter *Itasca*, anchored off Howland to assist the Electra in navigation. "Gas is running low. Have been unable to reach you by radio. We are flying at 1,000 feet."

A few minutes later the pilot announced that she was circling but still could not spot the island nor receive any signals from the ship.

During the twenty-first hour the *Itasca* recorded Earhart's final known transmission: "We are on a line of position of 157 dash 137. Will repeat this message on 6210 kilocycles. Wait, listening on 6210. We are running north and south."

What happened to Earhart and Noonan after that is a puzzle



Amelia Earhart received world attention in June 1928, when, as a passenger, she became the first woman to fly across the Atlantic. The photograph above shows her with pilot Wilmer Stultz and mechanic Louis Gordon during a parade following their return to America. Eager to gain recognition in her own right, Earhart later became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic, the first person to fly solo from Hawaii to California, and the first to fly solo from Los Angeles to Mexico City—feats all achieved in her single-engine Lockheed Vega (above right).

that has been debated for half a century now. Throughout the history of flight, pilots have vanished with their airplanes. Most of them have been forgotten. But the disappearance of Amelia Earhart during her 1937 around-the-world attempt hints of intrigue and has inspired a series of bestsellers, a 1943 Hollywood movie, several television documentaries, and, of course, imaginative speculation. Like the unknown fate of the Roanoke settlers and the crew of the *Mary Celeste*, the Earhart disappearance has become a classic American mystery, nurtured over the years by tantalizing clues.

Earhart herself had fascinated the public long before her last flight. At age twenty-four she bought her first airplane, a yellow Kinner Canary biplane, at a time (1922) when most women did not even drive cars. In it



she set one of several aviation firsts for women by reaching a record 14,000-foot altitude. In 1928, she made headlines and received ticker-tape parades after becoming the first woman to fly across the Atlantic, joining pilot Wilmer Stultz and mechanic Louis Gordon in a flight from Newfoundland to Wales. Although only a passenger on the Atlantic crossing, in the public's mind Earhart was already becoming the female counterpart of national hero Charles Lindbergh, who had made his famous solo flight from New York to Paris the previous year.

A year later Earhart set a women's closed-course speed record of 181 mph and won third place in the first women's cross-country derby. In 1931 she set an 18,451-foot altitude record for autogiros (precursors of the helicopter). The following year, on the fifth anniversary of Lindbergh's historic flight, she made the first solo flight across the Atlantic by a woman. Three months later she set the women's speed record for a nonstop transcontinental flight, only to break that mark the next year.

In 1935 Earhart became the first person to fly solo the 2,400 miles from Hawaii to California and the first to fly solo from Los Angeles to Mexico City. From there she set another record by flying her Lockheed Vega nonstop all the way to Newark, New Jersey.

By this time the tall, slender, short-haired woman had gained worldwide acclaim. She was in constant demand as a speaker and product endorser. She had received



In the summer of 1936, with funding provided by Purdue University, Earhart purchased a specially-built, \$70,000 Lockheed Electra (above). With it she planned to accomplish her greatest challenge to date: an around-the-world flight via the equatorial route—a distance of 29,000 miles.

dozens of commendations, including the Distinguished Flying Cross before a joint session of Congress, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt had entertained her at the White House.

But Earhart wanted to do more, and a flight around the world seemed the ultimate aerial adventure for a woman in 1937. A group of male Army pilots had made the first successful world flight in 1924 in three single-engine D-WC biplanes, staying close to land for safety. Earhart proposed to follow the more dangerous, over-water, equatorial route.

With financial support from Purdue University, where she had served as a career counselor for women students, Earhart purchased a twin-engine Electra for the flight. Well-known Hollywood stunt pilot Paul Mantz signed on as technical director for the project and supervised the installation of long-range fuel tanks and other special equipment in the aircraft. Various federal agencies extended diplomatic hands where needed, and President Roosevelt authorized government con-

struction of an airstrip on remote Howland Island in the South Pacific, where Earhart would land to refuel. Her husband, George Palmer Putnam of G.P. Putnam's Sons publishing company, arranged for caches of fuel, oil, and spare parts at the more remote stopovers. Through promotional campaigns he raised thousands of dollars to offset expenses.

Finally, on March 17, 1937, Earhart, Mantz (who was hopping a ride to meet his fiancée in Honolulu), and navigators Harry Manning and Fred J. Noonan took off from Oakland, California. Plans called for an east-to-west route with two navigators on board during the difficult Pacific portions. But while taking off from Hawaii on the second leg of the journey, Earhart ground-looped the Electra (made a sharp, uncontrollable turn while still on the ground), and the landing gear collapsed. By the time the plane had been shipped back to California and repaired at the Lockheed factory, changes in global weather patterns dictated a reversal in the route. In the meantime, Manning, apparently growing skeptical of Earhart's flying abilities, had withdrawn from the project, leaving Earhart and Noonan to face the challenge together.

By mid-May the Electra was airworthy again. On June 1, following a cross-country flight from Oakland to Miami, Florida, and after final adjustments were made to the aircraft, Earhart and the tall, dark-haired forty-four-year-old Noonan began their second attempt.



214
Marshall Islands

Marshall Islands

Gilbert Islands

Equator

New Guinea


Lay

Solomon Islands

Intended Route

Australia

An Enduring Mystery



Flying from Lae, New Guinea, to Howland Island in the South Pacific—at 2,556 miles the longest and most hazardous leg of an around-the-world flight attempt—pilot Amelia Earhart and navigator Fred Noonan vanished with their Lockheed Electra on July 2, 1937. A \$4 million air and sea search of more than 250,000 square miles by the U.S. Navy failed to locate any wreckage or the fliers' remains. Officials concluded that the aviators, failing to locate Howland Island, had been forced down at sea and apparently were lost with their aircraft. Not everyone accepted the "official" version, however. Years later, following the U.S. invasion of the Pacific islands during World War II, intriguing rumors of a white man and woman taken prisoner by the Japanese surfaced. Several postwar expeditions to the Marianas and Marshall Islands by private individuals turned up information implying that Earhart and Noonan had survived their flight. One popular theory suggests that the fliers, having failed to locate Howland, turned back toward the British-controlled Gilberts. But flying north of their intended course, they instead made a forced landing in the Japanese-controlled Marshalls. Taken captive by the Japanese, they were removed to Saipan, where they died in captivity or were executed. Other theories abound, including one that Earhart and Noonan were on a secret spy mission for the U.S., seeking information on Japanese war preparations in the Mandated Islands. But to date no conclusive evidence regarding their fate has been uncovered, and fifty years after the disappearance of America's most famous woman flier, the mystery remains just that—a mystery.



Although Earhart had at first hoped to fly solo on her world-girdling flight, it soon became obvious that she could not both pilot the twin-engine Electra and navigate it over long distances. Here she poses with technical advisor Paul Mantz (left) and navigators Harry Manning and Frederic Noonan in February 1937. The navigators would be especially needed during the difficult trans-Pacific segment of the journey, which was to carry the fliers westward from Oakland, California, to Hawaii and then to tiny Howland Island in the South Pacific.

Over the next several weeks they steadily worked their way east, making nearly two dozen stops in the Caribbean, South America, Africa, India, Burma, Singapore, the Dutch East Indies, Timor, and Australia, before arriving at Lae, New Guinea on June 30.

Now only 7,000 miles remained of the 29,000-mile flight. But the next leg was to be the longest and most dangerous one of the journey—2,556 miles over the ocean to tiny Howland Island, located just north of the equator and some 1,900 miles southwest of Hawaii. About half of the flight would be at night, out of sight of land. The Coast Guard Cutter *Itasca* was anchored off Howland, waiting to help guide the fliers to the island by radio. The USS *Ontario*, located halfway between Lae and Howland, was to provide weather data.

EARHART AND NOONAN took off in the fuel-heavy *Electra* at mid-morning on July 2 (July 1 in the United States and other points east of the International Date Line) and presumably headed northeast toward Howland. A direct route would have taken them by the New Britain, Solomon, Nukumanu, and Gilbert Islands as well as the USS *Ontario*, with an early-morning arrival at Howland after almost a day in the air.

Island sightings in the early part of the flight would provide checkpoints. For the night and empty-ocean portions, Noonan planned to use a combination of dead reckoning and celestial navigation. As the *Electra* approached Howland, the *Itasca* was expected to be able to provide Earhart with homing signals and in turn track the fliers with its direction-finding equipment.

The ship's radio operator recorded the first contact with the fliers at 2:45 A.M. Howland time, but Earhart's transmission was barely audible. News correspondents on board heard the words "cloudy and overcast." Although subsequent transmissions increased in strength over the next several hours, their effectiveness did not. The *Itasca* repeatedly transmitted on various frequencies on both voice and key, asking Earhart for a position report. The pilot obviously was having trouble receiving the ship's signals, and the radio operator was unable to get Earhart to transmit on the proper frequency long enough for him to take a bearing on the plane.

The clock read 8:44 A.M. when Earhart, speaking un-



During her takeoff from Honolulu on the second segment of the world flight on March 20, 1937, Earhart ground-looped the Electra, damaging the landing gear, propellers, wing, and tail (above). The plane had to be shipped back to California for repairs and the flight postponed.

der obvious strain, sent her final known transmission: "We are on a line of position of 157 dash 137. Will repeat this message on 6210 kilocycles. Wait, listening on 6210. We are running north and south."

The "157 dash 137" apparently represented an early-morning sun line Noonan had made with his sextant, but without a cross-reference he could not determine where they were along that line. They were running "north and south" to try to find out. The problem was similar to hiking on the right trail but not knowing whether the campsite is behind or ahead, or how far.

As tension increased with each passing minute, the radiomen aboard the *Itasca* waited for more transmissions. None came. On the ship and the island, crewmen scanned the empty horizon for a speck in the sky and strained their ears for the faint rumbling of engines. Nothing.

By 10 A.M. Commander Warner Thompson concluded that the *Electra* must be out of fuel, and he ordered the ship under way to begin a search northwest of Howland.

"Lady Lindy Lost!," "Earhart Disappears," and "Amelia Lost in Pacific," declared banner headlines around the nation the following morning. On orders from President Roosevelt, the Navy dispatched the aircraft carrier *Lexington* and half a dozen other ships to the Howland area. For a week aircraft and ships scoured the ocean, covering a total of about 250,000 square miles at a cost of \$4 million (1937 dollars). It was perhaps the most intensive search in U.S. history.

FAILING TO FIND any trace of the missing aircraft or crew, Navy officials concluded that Earhart and Noonan had been forced to ditch the *Electra* in the ocean and that they had been lost at sea, possibly going down with the plane. Many aviation experts agreed, recognizing the difficulty of locating a tiny island after such a long flight. But the public frowned. Such a pro-saic end seemed inappropriate for an attractive daredevil pilot who had been earning applause for ten years. Surely drowning was not the only possibility.

There was sufficient cause for speculation. The USS *Lexington* did not arrive in the Howland area until July 13, eleven days after the disappearance; a life raft or an airplane buoyed by empty fuel tanks could drift a long way in that time. Five years later, Earhart would be remembered when the world-famous aviator Eddie Rick-enbacker and two fellow castaways survived twenty-four days in a drifting life raft after their B-17 became

By the time Earhart's Electra had been repaired, crew member Harry Manning had dropped out of the project and global weather conditions dictated a change in plans. When Earhart began her second attempt in June 1937, with Noonan as her sole crewman, she flew eastward from Florida across the Caribbean and Atlantic. Here Earhart's husband George Palmer, who handled fund-raising and publicity for the flight, poses with her prior to the departure from Miami.



AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

lost on an 1,800-mile flight from Honolulu to Canton Island.

Also, crewmen on a search ship had sighted on the northern horizon what they thought might be green flares, although the Navy concluded the lights were just a meteor shower.

And, for several days after Earhart and Noonan's disappearance, ham-radio operators reported receiving the Electra's signals in various parts of the Pacific. Officials found that one civilian who excitedly announced picking up signals from Earhart actually had been listening to a "March of Time" dramatization of the last flight on commercial radio. But were *all* of those reports spurious?

Seeking every available clue to the fate of his missing wife, George Putnam even asked Earhart's pilot friend Jacqueline Cochran, who reportedly had extrasensory powers, to try to "see" the Electra's location. Cochran said she perceived the plane to be on the water in the search area, and that Earhart was unhurt, but Noonan had fractured his forehead against the bulkhead in the navigator's compartment. She named the *Itasca* as being involved in the search, although she claimed never to have heard the name before. On the third day, according to Cochran, the plane sank.

The mystery inevitably prompted some obvious hoaxes, mostly in the form of notes in bottles and messages carved on driftwood. Over the years, imaginations flared in other ways: Earhart and Noonan had been on a spying mission for President Roosevelt and were captured by the Japanese military; they were secret lovers who absconded to a desert island; Earhart was the infamous Tokyo Rose of World War II; she suffered amnesia and worked as a prostitute in Japan.

RKO Studios contributed to the speculation with the 1943 movie, "Flight for Freedom," in which Rosalind Russell portrayed a famous aviatrix named Tonie Carter. In the movie, the Carter character plans a flight around the world, agreeing to a U.S. government request to make an unannounced landing at a Pacific island to give search planes a chance to peek at Japan's military fortifications in the Mandated Islands. But just before taking off for the last leg of the journey, Carter discovers that the Japanese have learned of her scheme and that now they intend to rescue her at the island in order to render a U.S. search unnecessary. Carter patriotically ditches the plane—an Electra—into the ocean, allowing the search to proceed.

Amy Earhart, Amelia's mother, added to the spy theory by telling the press in 1954 that she was certain her daughter had been on a secret mission for the government, captured by the Japanese, and taken to Tokyo where she was executed.

For years after Earhart's disappearance, many thought she might still be alive. Participants in "Operation Earhart," an unofficial investigation by a group of U.S. Air Force officers headed by Joe Gervais, ultimately agreed with that theory.

A 1970 book on the investigation, *Amelia Earhart*

Lives by Joe Klaas, postulates that Earhart had been on a mission similar to the one in the 1943 movie. After the aborted Hawaii takeoff, suggests the author, government officials secretly persuaded Earhart to switch to a new, experimental, pressurized Electra. That version, dubbed XC-35, resembled the original but was far superior in range and speed—the sort of aircraft suited to a spying mission. After studying photos of the Electra at various points in time, Gervais noted subtle dissimilarities that indicated to him that Earhart had used at least two different aircraft.

Japanese fighters shot Earhart down at Hull Island in the Phoenix archipelago, the book claims, and the pilot was imprisoned in Japan until the end of World War II. Then, after a pledge by the United States not to prosecute Emperor Hirohito as a war criminal, the Japanese released Earhart. Stateside again, weary of publicity, she assumed the alias Irene Bolam and lived a quiet life until Gervais tracked her down in New Jersey.

Bolam, who bore some resemblance to Earhart, emphatically denied the allegation about her former life. Gervais also found an elderly man named William Van Dusen who seemed to look and act as Noonan might had he survived.

And the airplane? *Amelia Earhart Lives* notes that an Electra with the same registration number as the one Earhart flew in 1937 crashed into a California mountain in 1961. Critics concede that much, but contend that the 1961 Electra was a World War II version whose number Paul Mantz had changed in honor of Earhart.

THE THEORY that Earhart and Noonan died at the hands of the Japanese military in the South Pacific has gained a much wider following over the years.

Josephine Blanco Akiyama, a Saipan-born Californian, caused a series of investigations into that possibility in the 1960s and 1970s with her story about an incident she said she witnessed as a girl. While riding her bicycle toward Saipan's Tanapag Harbor in the summer of 1937, Akiyama said, she watched a twin-engine airplane crash-land in the water. Amid much excitement a few minutes later, she saw a short-haired white woman and a white man who had been taken into Japanese custody. Soldiers led them away and shots followed.

Akiyama claimed that when she was a dental assistant on Saipan in 1946 she related the incident to a Navy dentist and a patient who were discussing the Earhart disappearance. The dentist informed Navy officials of the news, but apparently no investigation resulted.

Years later, noticing the similarity between the Caucasians she had seen and photos of Earhart and Noonan, she began repeating the story. In his 1960 book *Daughter of the Sky*, Paul L. Briand, Jr., points out that Akiyama had no reason to fabricate such a tale. Briand, an Air Force officer, states in his book that a Saipan landing represented a navigational error of one hundred degrees in bearing and 2,600 miles in distance, assuming the Electra had been heading for Howland. But, he adds, such an error was possible given the weather con-

ditions and the navigational tools with which Earhart and Noonan had to work. The Electra, he says, carried enough fuel to stay aloft for twenty-six hours.

After the *San Mateo Times* published an article about Akiyama's story in 1960, San Francisco CBS radio broadcaster Fred Goerner launched his own investigation. With CBS's backing, Goerner traveled to Saipan and interviewed residents, many of whom said they remembered seeing or hearing about a Caucasian man and woman on the island in 1937. Most agreed that the Japanese considered the prisoners to be spies and that one or both were eventually executed.

As news of Goerner's efforts spread, former GIs who had served on Saipan after the 1944 U.S. invasion contacted the broadcaster to retell stories of Earhart. One tip led Goerner and his team to an unmarked grave from which they recovered human remains. But back in the United States an anthropologist declared these to be of non-Caucasian origin. Goerner's team also recovered parts of a twin-engine airplane from the bottom of Tanapag Harbor. The parts proved to be of Japanese manufacture.

Several veterans recalled finding and turning over to Naval Intelligence some of Earhart's possessions, including a suitcase and diary, on an island in the Marianas. Others claimed to have seen the Electra on Saipan or to have been involved, under orders, with the clandestine removal of Earhart's and Noonan's remains.

As Goerner researched the U.S. government's substantial involvement in planning Earhart's around-the-world trip and probed its possible knowledge of the flight's fate, he encountered what he deemed to be evasiveness from officials. Some government files on Earhart were classified.

The broadcaster's six-year investigation included four trips to Saipan. Goerner ultimately concluded that Earhart and Noonan had been on an unofficial spying mission for the government to observe Japan's suspected illegal fortifications of some of the Mandated Islands. After World War I the League of Nations had "mandated" oversight of the Caroline, Mariana, and Marshall Islands to Japan with the stipulation that they not be used for military purposes. But Japan refused to permit foreigners to inspect the islands, and the United States became increasingly concerned that the Japanese were fortifying the area for future military control of the Pacific.

The Electra, Goerner argues, was equipped with engines more powerful than the public realized in order to ensure the plane had enough speed for a secret detour north to the major Japanese base of Truk in the Carolines. He noted that the USS *Ontario* never heard from Earhart although it waited along a direct route between Lae and Howland to assist her.

After reconnoitering at Truk, Earhart and Noonan turned southeast toward Howland, Goerner speculates. But the airplane ran into showers and clouds that hin-

Continued on page 48

The host city for the Constitutional Convention was the largest, most cosmopolitan, and progressive in America—but not without its share of urban problems.

Philadelphia

1787

by Harold Holzer

PHILADELPHIA could not have been the most agreeable place to live and work in the summer of 1787.

A torrid heat wave had made America's largest city almost unbearable that year. Older Philadelphians could recall no hotter summer in nearly forty years. "At each inhaling of air," a tormented visitor recorded, "one worries about the next one. The slightest movement is painful." But the heat was not the city's only discomfort. Mud choked the unpaved streets. Polluted by latrines, drinking water from private wells grew more bitter. Swarms of flies and other insects plagued people night and day. And to make matters worse, sewers in the center of the city were being dug up and reconstructed. Acrid odors from the sewers, stables, breweries, tan-yards, and gutters pervaded the city.

But it was in this sweltering, teeming metropolis, rife with discomfort and pollution, that fifty-five men from twelve* of the United States lived and worked for four months, trying to craft what one of them, James Madison, prayed would be a "firm, wise, manly system of federal government."

Even before the Constitutional Convention, Philadelphia had earned its position as the cradle of national liberty. It was here that America had declared itself free in 1776 under "the laws of Nature and Nature's God." Here, too, the first sessions of Congress had met—at least until its members fled the city in the summer of 1783 in the wake of Continental Army veterans who marched into town to demand back pay.

Although the summer heat of Philadelphia in 1787 was anything but conducive to industriousness, the delegates met at the revered old State House—the monu-

**Rhode Island refused to send representatives to the Constitutional Convention.*

ment now known as Independence Hall—from five to seven hours a day, five or six days a week, beginning May 25.

There they had to decide whether to open or close the windows. If they kept them closed, they would inevitably sweat and suffer profusely, even if they shed their coats in the privacy of their deliberations. New England delegates to the Convention, such as John Langdon Jr. and Nicholas Gilman from New Hampshire and most likely Elbridge Gerry from Massachusetts, had brought and wore only their heavy woolen suits and tight wigs. Some of the southerners had known enough to bring light clothes, such as they were two hundred years ago, but at best they suffered only slightly less than their fellow countrymen from the North. If the delegates, clothed so warmly, chose to let in some air, they would hear the incessant pounding of hooves and wooden wheels over the cobblestones on Walnut Street. And more flies—a "veritable torture," according to one visitor to the city—would invade the premises.

It is not known what the delegates decided about the windows because the president of the convention, George Washington, steadfastly barred the press and public from the proceedings, "lest our transactions get into the newspapers and disturb the public repose." But what is known is that the city tried to accommodate the states's representatives. On June 22, local street commissioners directed that gravel from the sewer site be carted over to the vicinity of the State House and spread along the pavement to muffle the noise.

No matter how appalling its sanitation and amenities seem retrospectively, however, Philadelphia was not unlike other large American cities of the age: busy, dirty, noisy—but exhilarating. Not a single delegate left a record of complaint or regret about the city.



OF COURSE some delegates, in fact all those from Pennsylvania, lived in Philadelphia year-round. Benjamin Franklin, the city's first citizen and a delegate to the convention, lived across the street from "The Market," an immaculately clean but boisterously busy three-block-long enclosed produce fair that, three days a week, attracted a veritable riot of shoppers, representing "some of every nation under heaven."

The original renaissance American, Franklin had only recently returned from his years of diplomatic triumph in France. Now a "short, fat, trunched old man" with a "bald pate and white locks," as one visitor described him, and all but immobilized from gout and kidney stones, the eighty-one-year-old Franklin nonetheless attended sessions as a delegate, held court at his house, welcomed guests to a dining room that seated twenty-four, and simultaneously oversaw some new additions to his property, including a print shop for his grandson.

Some say that as Franklin more and more emerged as a man of the world he was less and less trusted as a man of his city. Whether Philadelphians liked it or not, each working day they were presented with the unforgettable sight of this living monument commuting grandly to and from the State House. Because ordinary carriages

When state representatives to the Constitutional Convention assembled in Philadelphia in 1787, their host-city was the largest and most progressive metropolis in the United States. This engraving made by William Russell Birch a dozen years later depicts Second and Market streets, then the heart of the city. The combination town hall and market at left was torn down in 1837, but Christ Church (white steeple beyond) serves as a house of worship to this day.

jostled his aching body, Franklin imported from Paris a glass-windowed sedan chair, which he rode daily like some potentate, carried by local jail prisoners.

At night, Franklin's exhausted bearers would return to their cells in the Walnut Street Gaol, that, to the mortification of some local officials, stood directly across from State House yard. Delegates were frequently confronted with the sight of convicts thrusting makeshift sacks on poles through their cell bars, shouting "foul and horrid" profanities at the passersby. The day before Washington arrived in town, men were executed there. And yet the twelve-year-old fortress was considered a model prison of its day.

SURELY THE MOST WONDROUS PLACE in Philadelphia was Charles Willson Peale's museum, opened in his home in 1786. Peale was a portrait painter and an incurable collector. His museum was the Smithsonian of its day, an eclectic attic full of artworks, natural wonders, and scientific curiosities.

Here, Peale's advertisements claimed, visitors would be "gratified in the sight of many of the Wonderful Works of Nature which are now closeted and but seldom seen." Such claims were not overstated. Peale's man-made beach boasted a wide assortment of mummified "turtles, frogs, toads, lizards, water snakes," and "a collection of fish with their skins stuffed, water fowls . . . all having the appearance of life." It was a taxidermist's dream: "birds . . . partridge, quail, heath-hen . . . geese, ducks, cranes, herons," and animals as well: "bear, deer, leopard, tiger, wildcat, fox." Even the branches of the trees were "loaded with birds." Everything was "real, either their substance or their skins finely preserved."

Peale personally greeted guests when he could, admonishing them not to touch the stuffed birds, which they invariably did anyway, ignoring the large sign that read: "THEY ARE TREATED WITH ARSNIC [sic] POISONING." The museum was a "school of education for children," a treasure-trove of wonders for adults—irresistible to both.

There was nothing else quite like Peale's unusual house in all of Philadelphia, although there were many great homes. There was William Shippen's on Prune Street, for example, which in addition to hosting several delegates had the distinction of housing a camel in its back yard. William Bingham's mansion on the south side of town boasted a greenhouse and exotic fruit trees, as well as a rare circular driveway off Third Street.

Just up the block was the Willing plot, with a lovely home occupied by the owner, a leading merchant, and an even larger one he rented to Benjamin Chew, former Chief Justice of Pennsylvania. Judge Chew's daughter would be married there during the convention, with George Washington in attendance as a special guest.

Nearby, William Lewis lived in "Fort Wilson," so named because during the Revolution, its owner, James Wilson, had been besieged there by a mob of Patriots protesting his acting as attorney for local Loyalists. Friends, among them several who would later become Convention delegates, rushed off to nearby Carpenters' Hall, the guild headquarters off Chestnut Street, to gather muskets to hold off the attack.

During the Convention, Carpenters' Hall was occupied by the Library Company of Philadelphia. Many delegates went there during the summer to borrow books. (Two failed to return them.) Built in 1773, the little hall still stands, once again run by the Carpenters' Company.

Intermingled with the stately and imposing homes were the inns and boarding houses, bursting with Convention activity. Right next door to the Franklin residence were the stables of the Indian Queen, the city's

largest and most popular tavern. A visitor from New York once described the place as "a large pile of buildings with many spacious halls and numerous small apartments appropriated for lodging rooms, and kept in an elegant style." Washington dined here at least twice that summer, and many of his colleagues did so more often, although the inn directly fronted the block-long excavation of the Fourth Street sewer.

At City Tavern on Second Street, a highly popular gathering spot, Rufus King of Massachusetts rented a room, and fellow delegates met there often for informal meetings and receptions. For inspiration, just across the street was the Slate Roof House, where William Penn had resided at the dawn of the century. At the time of the Convention, however, it housed clothes-cleaning and tailor shops.

Among the larger of the local inns was Mary House's "genteel" establishment only minutes from Independence Hall. Although it was only two blocks from the aromatic Potts Brewery, it became the favorite of the Virginia delegates. Here Edmund Randolph and James Madison stayed, and Washington would have, too, had he not accepted a last-minute invitation from Robert Morris to room at his fine, four-story brick mansion.

The Morris house became extremely crowded. Robert and Mary Morris had seven children and two servants, and Washington brought along servants of his own from Mount Vernon. The Morrises entertained lavishly and frequently during the summer, serving lemonade from silver urns and providing harpsichord music during meals. Mrs. Morris recalled she had never had a less demanding guest than Washington. The president of the convention would "come in and be about the house for hours, without any one of the family being aware of it." He spent much time reading, writing, and meditating. And his tranquil stay was disturbed but once, when, to the family's horror, Washington witnessed what he recorded in his diary as "a little mal-a-propos" at the front door, some business associate come to harangue Mr. Morris, known as the richest man in Philadelphia, about paying his London bills. Washington could not have imagined it, but only eleven years later, Morris, the man who had helped finance the Revolution, would spend more than three years in the debtors' prison on Prune Street.

That summer in Philadelphia the Presbyterians were also holding a convention, as was, more importantly, the Society of the Cincinnati, composed of Revolution-

The most remarkable tourist attraction in 1787 Philadelphia was the museum operated by portrait painter and collector Charles Willson Peale (opposite). During the Constitutional Convention the nation's first public art gallery and museum of natural history was located in Peale's home. By the time this self-portrait was completed by the artist three and one-half decades later, however, his collection had been moved to the upper level of Independence Hall.



"THE ARTIST IN HIS MUSEUM" BY CHARLES WILLSON PEALE; COURTESY OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS, PHILADELPHIA

ary War officers. Philadelphia was alive with hospitality, an ambience that successfully combined business with pleasure.

Philadelphia had another side as well. It was very much a Quaker city, with deep religious roots and a host of churches to show for it. There were the Friends Meeting House and the Old Buttonwood Presbyterian Church in the northeast corner of town, right near Claypoole and Dunlap's shop, where the first copies of the finished constitution were printed. There was Christ Church on Second Street, where delegate James Wilson would be buried in 1798. Washington worshipped "with impartial zeal" during the Convention, visiting a number of churches, including St. Mary's Roman Catholic on May 27.

With such a schedule Washington must have been much in demand in Philadelphia that year—at table, at services, at the portrait painter's. An observer noted that he "lived the life of a national hero" throughout his four months in Philadelphia—eclipsing even Franklin as an object of curiosity and adulation. He had been welcomed into the city by throngs of well-wishers when he arrived at Gray's Landing on the Schuylkill River on Sunday, May 13. Church bells rang, artillery salutes were fired, and crowds followed the General to his first stop—Franklin's home. He would subsequently be winned and dined in "all the leading homes of the city."

AS THE CAPITAL CITY of the young nation, and thanks to Washington and the conclave over which he was presiding that summer, Philadelphia became the center of American society. But foreigners remained unimpressed, many still finding the city hopelessly provincial, its men "grave," its women "serious." French visitors complained about everything from the lack of "casement windows" and "coffee-houses" to the absence of "libertine wives."

Another tourist admitted the local girls were attractive, but predicted they'd be "faded at twenty-three, old at thirty-five, decrepit at forty or forty-five." To others the city seemed horribly crowded. "How busy the city by day," complained one, "and how noisy." And yet, "there is no city in the world, perhaps, so quiet" at night. At 11 P.M., "you may walk over half the town without seeing the face of a human being except the watchman" (the town crier who called out the time and weather conditions hourly until daybreak, and would even rouse residents who needed to wake up early). "What a gloomy Sunday reigns," a visitor lamented about the typical Philadelphia Sabbath. "One can imagine that some violent epidemic or plague had obliged everyone to shut himself up at home."

And yet the city had much to offer: miles of beautiful riverfront; the Market, "neat and clean as a dining hall;" the endless but magnificent chiming of bells from

churches and street peddlers alike; street lighting, libraries, and a fire company—all proposed or created by Franklin; and shops of every description, selling every convenience a visitor could imagine—even the new fad from Europe, the toothbrush. Without doubt, Philadelphia was the most prosperous, enterprising, and progressive of American cities. It even boasted a municipal clinic that dispensed medical care and drugs to the poor, although many local residents continued to rely on such home remedies as their favored cure for jaundice: a dose of white wine laced with goose dung and earthworms.

Foreign visitors may have poked fun at Philadelphia's Quaker plainness and pre-Victorian inhibitions, but having watched the delegates to this historic convention walk freely about town, open their own doors, and shop for themselves, even the most jaded observers knew they were witnessing something magnificent in its simplicity. After witnessing this, the Marquis de Berbe-Marbois admitted: "I am not sure that people who have porters, stewards, butlers, and covered carriages with springs would have offered the same resistance to despotism."

Of course the enduring monument to this spirit—the shrine to the emerging nation, was the State House, where the delegates met. It did not look exactly as it now does; in fact the building appeared rather run-down that summer. Its famous steeple had decayed so much that it had been removed after the war, leaving a "naked tower" that would not be crowned again until 1828. One of the streets surrounding the State House square was unpaved. There was excavation for a new Congress Hall on the west side of the square, and another gaping hole on the east side where the new American Philosophical Society would be built.

Yet, despite its deteriorated condition, there was something undeniably compelling about the State House. Built more than fifty years earlier at a cost of six thousand pounds Pennsylvania currency, its graceful federal architecture, gentle piazzas, and spacious interiors made it uniquely attractive for its time. But far more important than what it looked like was what had happened there and what was happening now. For here, as a local paper pointed out that year, a "revolution in favor of liberty" had been forged in 1776. And here a "revolution in government" was taking place in 1787.

In this shrine the Constitution of the United States was formally adopted by the convention in September. As it was being signed by the delegates, James Madison glanced at Benjamin Franklin and observed the old doctor staring intently at Washington's elevated chair, the back of which bore a carved and painted sunburst. Madison then heard Franklin tell the delegates nearby "that Painters had found it difficult to distinguish in their art a rising from a setting sun. I have," said he, "often and often in the course of the Session, and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that behind the President without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting: But now at length I have the happiness to know that it is a rising and not a setting sun."

Suggested additional reading: *Miracle at Philadelphia: The Story of the Constitutional Convention, May to September 1787* by Catherine Drinker Bowen (Little, Brown, 1966).



AND SO IT ENDED—for the delegates, that is, not for Philadelphia. Yet to come was the state convention called to consider ratification, and the official vote of approval on December 12. Not until June of the next year, however, did New Hampshire become the ninth state to ratify, making the Philadelphia-born constitution the official law of the land.

And then, on July 4, 1788, Philadelphia exploded in a “hilarious and picturesque” celebration, a three-mile-long “grand Federal procession” of 17,000 marchers, and floats, such as the huge eagle drawn by six horses, displaying a large, framed copy of the Constitution fixed on a staff crowned by a liberty cap ornament, and accompanied by ten men, each representing a state that had ratified, walking arm-in-arm to symbolize the Union.

Then came the “New Roof” float, a huge dome, with thirteen Corinthian columns and a cupola with the figure of “Plenty” at the pedestal, drawn by ten white horses. The “New Roof” was a symbol based on an allegorical poem composed the previous December by Francis Hopkinson in which he criticized the Anti-Federalists for preferring an old roof to a new one. A banner on the float read: “In Union the fabric stands strong.”

Finally, to demonstrate that the people of Philadel-

Independence Hall (then the State House), where convention delegates met to strengthen and eventually replace the Articles of Confederation, did not then have the steeple that visitors to Philadelphia see today. A tower with a wooden steeple had been added to the building between 1750 and 1753, but because of its deteriorated condition, it was removed in 1781. Also visible in this 1799 Birch engraving is Philosophical Hall (to the right of the State House), still under construction during the Constitutional Convention.

phia stood squarely behind the Constitution created in their city, came the ordinary people: the City Troop, of course, the company that had escorted Washington into town to begin the convention, but also a parade of gilders, glovers, tallow chandlers, saddlers, stay makers, coopers, engravers, brass-founders, druggists, bricklayers, gunsmiths, and printers—representatives of every trade, craft, and walk of life from the city where America had sent its best and brightest that torrid summer of 1787. ★

Harold Holzer, who works for New York Governor Mario Cuomo, is also a free lance writer specializing in political history.



Philadelphia 1987

Many of the sites frequented by delegates to the Constitutional Convention in 1787 can still be visited today.



PHILADELPHIA, a treasure chest of historic sites and artifacts from early American history, is now the focus of a year-long celebration marking the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution. The exhibits, special events, festivals, and re-enactments of “We the People 200” are expected to attract hundreds of thousands of American and foreign visitors to this historic city, which was host to the delegates of the Constitutional Convention during the summer of 1787. Having been the center of patriotic activity before and during the Revolutionary War, the meeting place of Continental and Federal Congresses, and the nation’s first capitol until 1800, Philadelphia holds interest for anyone with a penchant

Just as it was the center of activity during the Constitutional Convention in 1787, so Independence Hall (left center, with white steeple and clock tower) is today the focal point of Philadelphia’s Independence National Historical Park. Originally the state house of Pennsylvania, the building served as a national meeting place for statesmen throughout the colonial and federal periods.

for the nation’s heritage. The listing on the following six pages is a mere sampling of places rich in history and worth visiting. ★

Historic Sites and Museums

The Visitor Center, Independence National Historical Park

(Southeast corner of Third and Chestnut Streets; 215-597-8974 or 215-597-8975; after hours call 215-627-1776)

This is where all visits to historic Philadelphia should begin. Here the visitor can obtain maps and information about special programs and tours. A computer exhibit about the U.S. Constitution highlights milestones in the charter's history and its significance today. Visitors may also see a twenty-eight-minute John Huston film, "Independence," that dramatizes life in Philadelphia from 1774 to 1796. Other displays at the center show what life was like in 1776 Philadelphia. Visitor Center hours are 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily (until 6 P.M. in the summer.) Park rangers are on duty to answer questions, and foreign language programs are available. A store on the premises sells books, post cards, and slides of the park.

Independence Hall

(Chestnut Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets)

Constructed between 1732 and 1756 as the Pennsylvania State House, this building is now famous as the site of the signing of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. The hall has been restored wherever possible to its original late eighteenth-century appearance. Although most of the original furnishings were destroyed during the British occupation of Philadelphia in 1777, the pieces now in the hall are from the period.

The two treasures of greatest interest are in the Assembly Room (called by guides "the most historically significant room in America"): the "rising sun" chair in which George Washington sat while presiding over the Constitutional Convention and the silver inkstand used by the delegates to sign both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Independence Hall is open to visitors by tour only. The half-hour tours begin in the East wing every fifteen to twenty minutes and are on a first-come, first-served basis. Hours are 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily (until 8 P.M. in the summer).

Graff House

(Southwest corner of Seventh and Market Streets)

This is a reconstruction of the house where Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence in June 1776. Replicas of the two second-floor rooms Jefferson rented contain items like those he brought with him from Virginia. Visitors can also see Jefferson's original draft of the Declaration of Independence. A twelve-minute film dramatizes Jefferson's stay in Philadelphia during the summer of 1776. The Graff House is open 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily.

Congress Hall

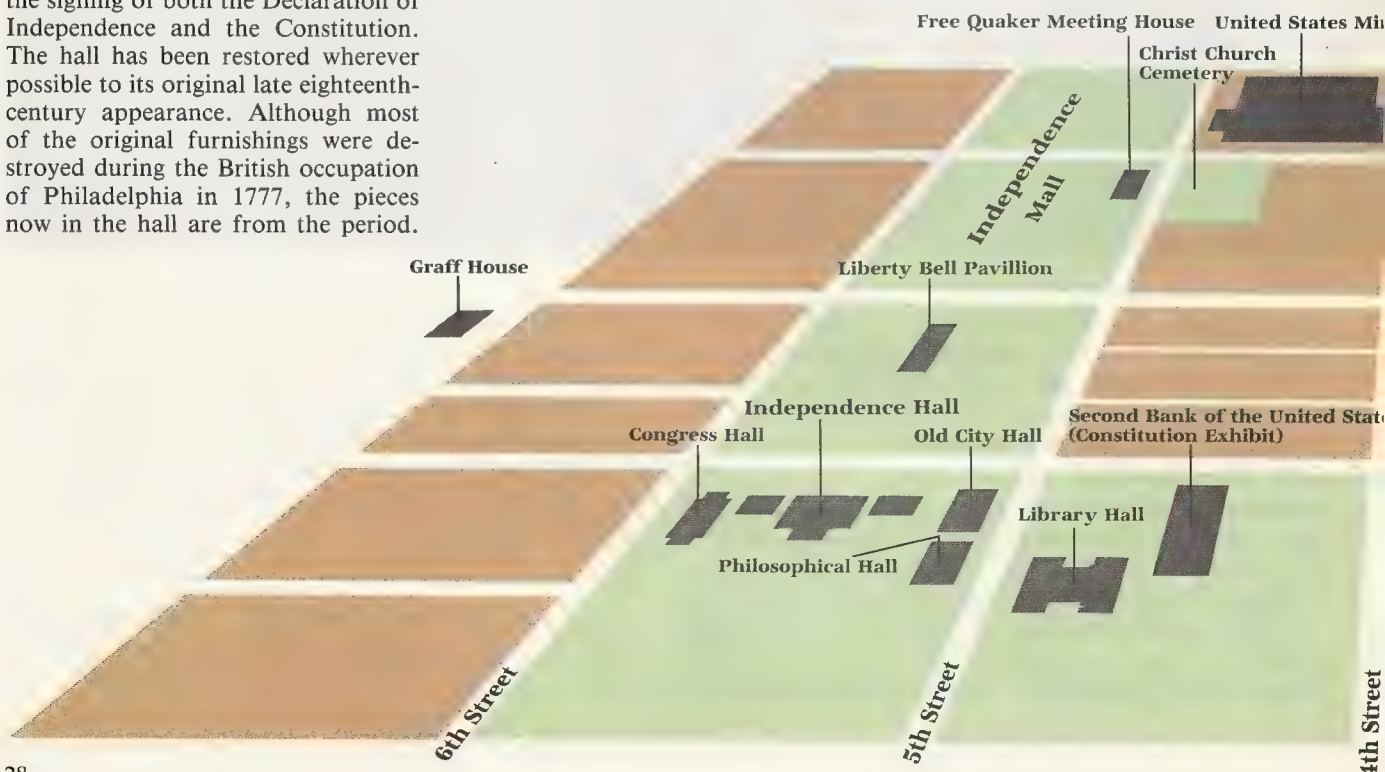
(Southeast corner of Sixth and Chestnut Streets)

The U.S. Congress met here from 1790 to 1800, with the House of Representatives on the first floor and the Senate above. Important historical events that occurred here include the second inauguration of George Washington; the establishment of the First Bank of the United States, the Federal Mint, and the Department of the Navy; and the ratification of John Jay's treaty with England. The hall, built between 1787 and 1789, was originally the Philadelphia County Courthouse. Open 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily.

Old City Hall

(Southwest corner of Fifth and Chestnut Streets)

As its name implies, Old City Hall, built in 1790, was originally meant for Philadelphia's municipal government. But the building became the home of the United States Supreme Court from 1791 to 1800. Today the first floor contains displays on the Supreme Court's work during that period. On the second floor, visitors can see exhibits on what life was like in late eighteenth-century Philadelphia. Open 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily.



Philosophical Hall

(104 South Fifth Street between Chestnut and Walnut Streets)

The American Philosophical Society owns this hall, the only privately-owned building on Independence Square. Benjamin Franklin founded the scholarly organization in 1743 and served as its president from 1769 until his death. The hall was completed in 1789. (Open only to members of the American Philosophical Society.)

Liberty Bell Pavilion

(Market Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets on Independence Mall)

In commemoration of the nation's Bicentennial in 1976, the Liberty Bell, cherished symbol of American freedom, was moved from Independence Hall to the glass-walled structure that now encloses it. The bell, which still hangs from its original yoke, was ordered from London in 1751 and was to hang in the State House tower. Soon after arrival in Philadelphia, the bell cracked and two local foundry men recast it. According to tradition, the crack now seen in the bell occurred while it was being rung in mourning the death of Chief Justice John Marshall in 1835. The pavilion is open 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily (until 8 P.M. in the summer).

Library Hall

(105 South Fifth Street between Chestnut and Walnut Streets)

The Library Company of Philadelphia, the oldest subscription library in the United States, first built its hall here in 1789-90. Delegates to the Continental and Federal Congresses and the Constitutional Convention used the facility. The building was demolished in 1884, but rebuilt and enlarged in 1959 by the American Philosophical Society that now has its library here. Documents in the collection include Benjamin Franklin's will, a copy of the Declaration of Independence in Thomas Jefferson's handwriting, and William Penn's 1701 Charter of Privileges. The library is open only to serious scholars from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily except holidays.

Second Bank of the United States

(420 Chestnut Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets)

This fine example of Greek Revival architecture currently houses "Miracle at Philadelphia," the keynote exhibit for the Constitution Bicentennial. The display features four drafts of the Constitution and other priceless documents, paintings, and memorabilia

gathered from the Library of Congress, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Library Company, and the American Philosophical Society. The bank, designed by William Strickland and built between 1819 and 1824, was one of the most influential financial institutions in the world until 1832 when it became an object of dispute between bank president Nicholas Biddle and President Andrew Jackson. In 1836 Jackson vetoed a bill renewing the bank's charter, but the building continued to house a financial institution through state authorization. The bank and the "Miracle at Philadelphia" exhibit are open 9 A.M. to 6 P.M. daily through September 17.

Army-Navy Museum (Pemberton House) and Marine Corps Memorial Museum

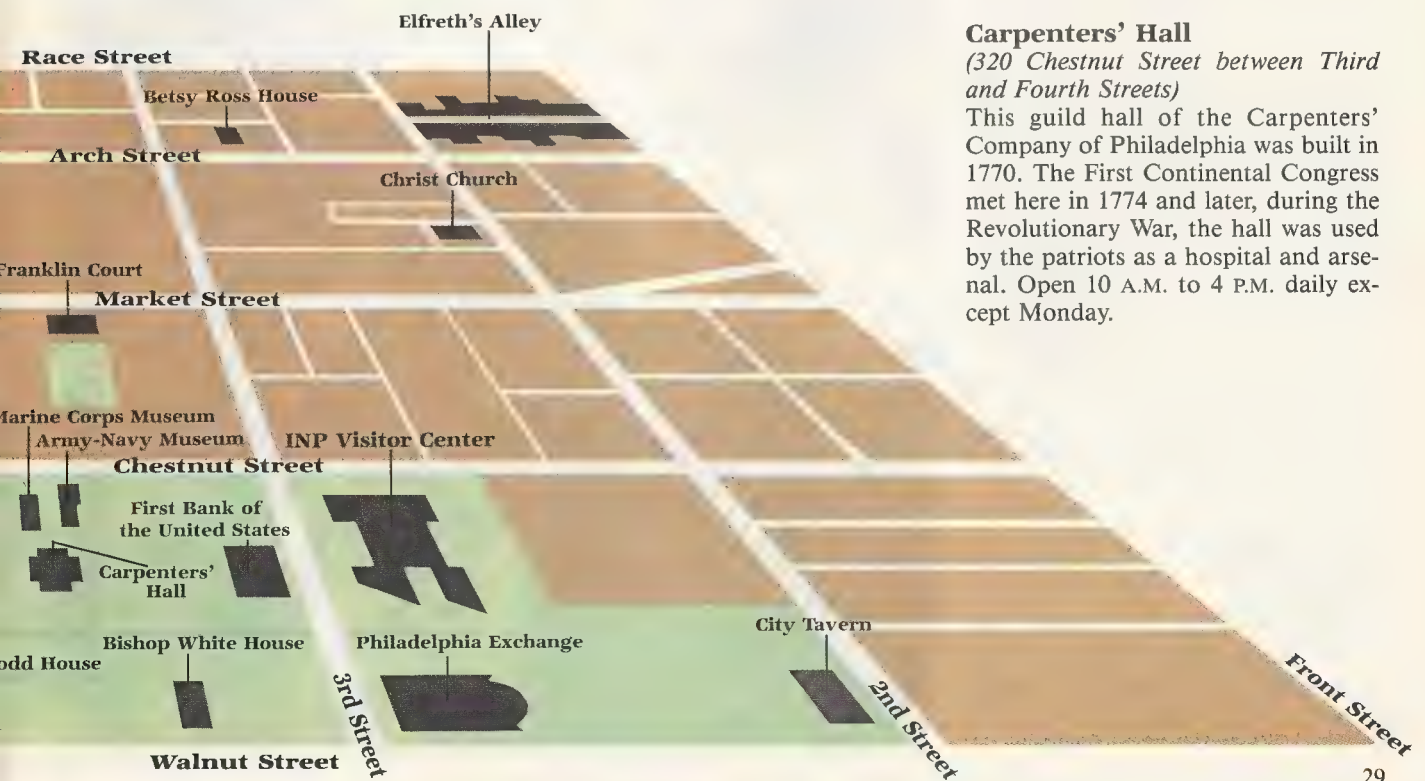
(Both on Chestnut Street between Third and Fourth Streets)

These museums are so close both in location and topic that visits should be combined. The Pemberton House has exhibits on the formation of the U.S. Army and Navy from 1775 to 1800, as well as a twelve-minute film about the colonial army. The Marine Corps Memorial Museum in New Hall features displays on Marines from the time of their founding in Philadelphia in 1775 to their service in the Revolution from 1775 to 1783. Open 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily.

Carpenters' Hall

(320 Chestnut Street between Third and Fourth Streets)

This guild hall of the Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia was built in 1770. The First Continental Congress met here in 1774 and later, during the Revolutionary War, the hall was used by the patriots as a hospital and arsenal. Open 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. daily except Monday.



Todd House

(Northeast corner of Fourth and Walnut Streets)

This house was built in 1775 as the residence of attorney John Todd, Jr., and his wife Dolley Payne. After Todd died during the yellow fever epidemic of 1793, Dolley married James Madison who was to become the fourth president of the United States. The Todd House is a fine example of an eighteenth-century middle-class Quaker home. An item of particular interest here is a precursor of the office copier. The house is open by tour only. Free tickets are available at the INHP Visitor Center (Third and Chestnut Streets).

Bishop White House

(309 Walnut Street between Third and Fourth Streets)

As the Todd House is an example of the lifestyle of middle-class eighteenth-century Philadelphians, the Bishop White House reflects the lifestyle of the upper class. The Rev. Dr. William White resided here from 1787, when the house was built, until his death in 1836. He was the first Episcopal bishop of Pennsylvania, chaplain to the Continental Congress, and rector of both Christ Church and St. Peter's Church. He chose the house because it was located between the two churches at which he served. Open by tour only. Free tickets are available at the INHP Visitor Center (Third and Chestnut Streets).

First Bank of the United States

(116 South Third Street between Chestnut and Walnut Streets)

This fine example of Neo-classical architecture was completed in 1797 and is probably the oldest bank building in the country. The bank was formed in 1791 at the request of then-Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton in an attempt to organize the nation's chaotic finances. The building was also the first headquarters of the Treasury Department. The bank's exterior has been restored to its 1797 condition, but the interior has not. It is not open to the public.

Philadelphia Exchange

(Northeast corner of Third and Walnut Streets)

Designed by William Strickland, this Greek Revival building was constructed in 1834 to house the Philadelphia Stock Exchange. It has been called "one of the great creations of

American architecture." Only the building's exterior has been restored. The interior is closed to the public.

City Tavern

(Northwest corner of Second and Walnut Streets, 215-923-6059)

This tavern was the "after hours" meeting place of Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and other colonial leaders when the Continental and Federal Congresses convened in Philadelphia. Originally built in 1773, the tavern was reconstructed in 1976 for the U.S. Bicentennial. Open seven days a week for lunch (11:30 A.M. to 3 P.M.), cocktails, and dinner (5 P.M. to 10 P.M.). The tavern accepts reservations. The menu, furniture, and staff garb are from the colonial era.

Franklin Court

(Market Street between Third and Fourth Streets)

This is the site of the brick home in which Benjamin Franklin lived while serving as a delegate to the Continental Congress, the Constitutional Convention, and as president of the executive council of Pennsylvania. Franklin died here in 1790; twenty years later the house was torn down. A steel, skeletal house frame has been constructed over the spot where it stood. Visitors here can see an underground museum, an eighteenth-century printing office, architectural/archaeological exhibits, a post office and postal museum, and a film about Franklin's family. Open 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily (until 6 P.M. in the summer).

COURTESY OF INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, NPS PHOTOGRAPH BY THOMAS L. DAVIES



Christ Church

(Second Street between Arch and Market Streets)

George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Betsy Ross, and other notables worshipped here. The parish, organized in 1695, remains an active Episcopal congregation. The present structure was completed in 1754. The church is open to visitors 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. Monday through Saturday and 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. on Sunday. Closed Monday and Tuesday during January and February.

Christ Church Cemetery

(Southeast corner of Fifth and Arch Streets)

Benjamin Franklin, four other signers of the Declaration of Independence, and many other renowned heroes and patriots are buried here. The burial ground is open to visitors 9:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. daily during the late spring, summer, and early fall.

Free Quaker Meeting House

(Southwest corner of Fifth and Arch Streets)

This brick meeting house was constructed in 1783 by the Free Quaker sect, members of the peace-loving Society of Friends who supported the American Revolution. They met here until 1834 when the Quakers reunited. The building is now a museum and part of Independence National Park. Visitors can see a five-minute slide show that presents the story of William Penn, the Society of Friends, and the Free Quakers. Open 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. daily except Monday, Memorial Day through Labor Day.

St. George's Methodist Church

(235 N. Fourth Street)

This historic church is the world's oldest Methodist Church in continuous use. The only interruption in its church-related activities occurred when it became a riding school for cavalry during the British occupation of Philadelphia. A Methodist Historical Center is located next to the church. Open 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. daily.

Old Swedes' Church

(Delaware Avenue and Christian Street)

The congregation of this church was formed in 1642 and its place of worship—the oldest church in Pennsylvania—was completed in 1700. Among the many relics and religious artifacts here are the 1608 Bible



of Queen Christiana of Sweden and mementos of Jenny Lind, who sang at the church in 1851. Open 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily.

United States Mint

(Fifth and Arch Streets)

About 1,500,000 coins per hour are manufactured here in the oldest (1792) and largest of the nation's three mints. A self-guided audio tour describes the process of making nickels, dimes, quarters, and pennies. There is also a museum and a souvenir shop where collectors can purchase uncirculated and commemorative coins. Open 9 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. daily, May through September; five or six days a week during other seasons.

Philadelphia Maritime Museum

(321 Chestnut Street between Third and Fourth Streets)

The museum features three floors of exhibits on maritime history. Among the displays are scale models of hundreds of ships from around the world, objects that survived the doomed maiden voyage of the *Titanic*, and a cutaway view of the frigate *Philadelphia*. Open 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. Monday through Saturday; 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. on

Sunday. Admission is \$1 for adults and 50 cents for children.

Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial

(Northwest corner of Third and Pine Streets)

The house where Polish immigrant and engineer Thaddeus Kosciuszko lived during 1797-1798 has been restored and designated a national memorial in honor of this man who designed defenses for the American Revolutionary forces. Visitors can view Polish-American exhibits, a portrait gallery, and a six-minute film about Kosciuszko. Open 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily.

Deshler-Morris House

(5442 Germantown Avenue)

Located about six miles northwest of Center City and dating from 1773, this residence served as a temporary "White House" for President George Washington during the Philadelphia yellow fever epidemic of 1793. The house was also the headquarters for British General Sir William Howe during the Battle of Germantown in October 1777. Open 1 P.M. to 4 P.M. Tuesday through Sunday, April through December. Admission is 50 cents.

Betsy Ross House

(239 Arch Street between Second and Third Streets)

According to tradition, this is where seamstress Betsy Ross stitched the first American flag at George Washington's request. Five rooms are furnished with period pieces. Open 9 A.M. to 6 P.M. daily, May through October, and until 5 P.M. the rest of the year.

Elfreth's Alley

(Off Second Street between Race and Arch Streets)

This narrow public thoroughfare is lined with thirty-three houses that date back to the early part of the eighteenth century. It is the oldest residential street in the United States. A small museum here is open 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. daily.

Benjamin Franklin National Memorial

(Twentieth Street and Benjamin Franklin Parkway)

Located in the Franklin Institute, this memorial includes a large statue of Franklin and a four-part exhibit called "Ben Franklin: Ideas and Images." Admission to the memorial is free, but there is a charge for the Franklin Institute Museum. Open 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. Monday through Saturday, noon to 5 P.M. Sunday.

Fireman's Hall Museum

(Second and Quarry Streets between Race and Arch)

In 1736 Benjamin Franklin founded in Philadelphia the nation's first fire company, the Union Fire Company. Later, other firefighting groups emerged and then, in 1871, the Union Fire Company and others joined to form the Philadelphia Fire Department. This hall is actually a restored 1876 firehouse. Exhibits include hand- and horse-drawn firefighting equipment, uniforms, and scale model fire engines. Open 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. Tuesday through Saturday.

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

(Southwest corner of Broad and Cherry Streets)

This example of Victorian Gothic architecture is a National Historic Landmark that was restored in 1976 for the U.S. Bicentennial. Established in 1805 by Charles Willson Peale, the Academy was the nation's first art school and museum. The collection includes works by Peale, Benjamin West, Gil-

bert Stuart, William Rush, Thomas Sully, Winslow Homer, Thomas Eakins, and Andrew Wyeth. Open 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. Tuesday through Saturday (until 7 P.M. on Wednesday); 11 A.M. to 5 P.M. on Sunday. Admission is \$3 for adults and \$2 for students and senior citizens.

Philadelphia Museum of Art

(Benjamin Franklin Parkway near Twenty-Sixth Street)

Modeled after the Parthenon and completed in 1928, this vast, ten-acre museum contains more than 300,000 art objects in 200 galleries. Some of the better-known paintings here are Benjamin West's "Benjamin Franklin Drawing Electricity from the Sky," Charles Willson Peale's "Staircase Group," and Picasso's "Three Musicians." The museum also has fine renaissance and modern art collections, British, French, and American period rooms, and an arms and armor display. Open 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. Wednesday through Sunday. Open Tuesday for tours only. Admission is \$4 for adults and \$2 for students and senior citizens.

Norman Rockwell Museum

(Sixth Street between Chestnut and Walnut Streets)

Saturday Evening Post covers and other works of this twentieth-century American artist are exhibited here. Open 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. daily. Admission is \$1.50 for adults, \$1.25 for senior citizens, and children 12 and under free.

Atwater Kent Museum

(15 S. Seventh Street between Market and Chestnut Streets)

This museum contains displays on the growth and development of Philadelphia. Exhibits cover Philadelphia life from 1680 to 1880, archaeological finds from the vicinity, origins of the city's municipal services, and antique toys and dolls. The "Rogues' Gallery," a collection of mug shots of nineteenth-century criminals, is especially entertaining. Open 9:30 A.M. to 4:45 P.M. Tuesday through Saturday.

Constitution-Related Exhibits

The Magna Carta

(May through December 1987; Old City Hall, Fifth and Chestnut Streets)

Features an original of the Magna Carta, a British precursor of the U.S. Constitution in the struggle for individual freedoms.

Miracle at Philadelphia

(Through December 31, 1987; The Second Bank of the United States, Independence National Historical Park; open 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily, until 6 P.M. April 1 through November 1)

The keynote exhibit for the 1987 Constitution Bicentennial, this display documents the Constitutional Convention, events leading up to it, and the subsequent ratification process. The self-guided, multi-media exhibit features original drafts of the Consti-



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSEPH NETTIS, FROM PHOTO RESEARCHERS, INC., NEW YORK

tution, personal letters of leading convention delegates, and (on public view for the first time) Virginia representative James Madison's journal of Convention proceedings.

A Promise of Permanency: The United States Constitution After 200 Years

(Independence National Historical Park Visitor Center, Third and Chestnut Streets)

Interactive computer programs instruct on the durability and continuing relevance of the Constitution.

A More Perfect Union: The American People and Their Constitution

(June 18 through December 14, 1987; The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1300 Locust Street)

Examines the evolution of the Constitution through two hundred years as the basis of governing both public and private life in the United States. The exhibit includes eighty documents, prints, paintings, and artifacts from the Historical Society's collection.

The Delegates's Library: The Intellectual Heritage of the Constitutional Era

(May 15 through October 9, 1987; The Library Company of Philadelphia, 1314 Locust Street)

Examines the sources, writers, and thinkers that intellectually influenced the creators of the Constitution.

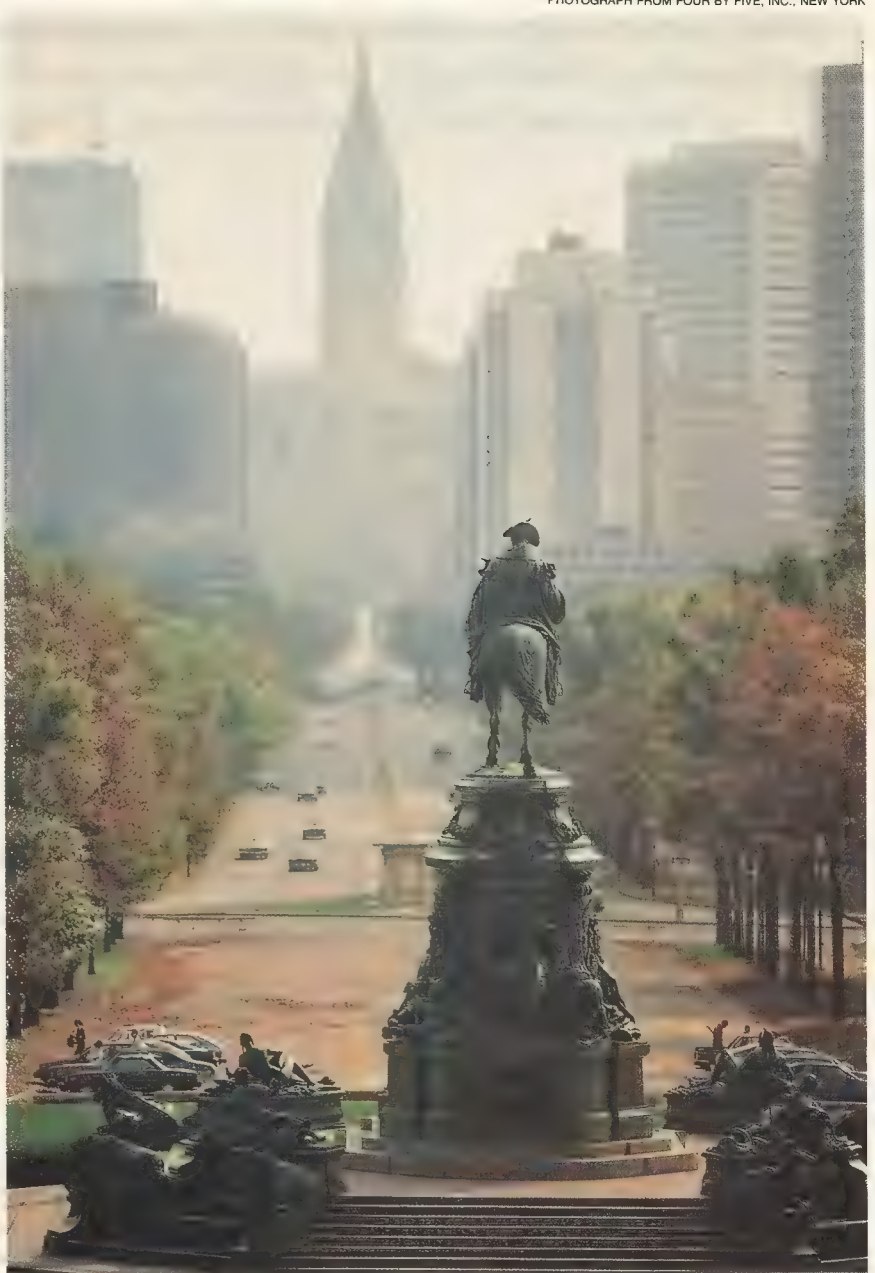
Designing a Nation: Science, Technology, and the Nation

(May through September 1987; The American Philosophical Society, 105 South Fifth Street)

Explores the relationship of science and government in the formative era of the Constitution. The exhibit also describes the work of two presidents of the American Philosophical Society: Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson.

Planning a Visit to Philadelphia

For more information on what to see and do in Philadelphia, contact the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, Sixteenth Street and John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19102, 1-800-523-2004 ext. 87 or 215-636-1666.



Two Useful Guides

Visitors to historic Philadelphia will find two guides published by the National Park Service of particular interest:

Independence: A Guide to Independence National Historical Park (64 pages, soft cover, \$2.25) is an informative and colorfully illustrated book providing an overview of historic sites in the park area.

The Framing of the Federal Constitution (112 pages, soft cover, \$4.75) provides a concise and readable overview of how the U.S. Constitution came into being. It also contains

the full text of the document, including Bill of Rights and Amendments. Also of interest is an artistic map created by Friends of Independence National Historical Park. **Philadelphia 1787** (\$2.50) is a bird's-eye-view drawing of the twenty-block area surrounding the Pennsylvania State House during the Constitutional Convention. Suitable for framing, the map contains hundreds of entertaining facts regarding early-day Philadelphia and its inhabitants.

Both books and the map are available from bookstores at Independence National Historical Park. For information regarding mail orders, call 1-800-821-2903. ★

Fifty years ago, undaunted by skepticism and a formidable engineering challenge, Joseph Baermann Strauss accomplished what most had considered an “impossible” dream.

Spanning the Golden Gate

by Richard Dillon

BRIDGE THE GOLDEN GATE? “Impossible!” That was the common rejoinder of a little more than a half-century ago. A choir of nay-sayers, composed of laymen and experts alike, public, press, and politicians, denounced the wild scheme. Most wrote off the idea as just plain wishful thinking. For no engineer could stretch a single span across the mile-wide gap between San Francisco’s Fort Point and Marin County’s Lime Point. And no bridge builder on earth could plant a pier in the middle of the Pacific Ocean’s deep and tide-ripped “Gate” either to support a long single span or to join two shorter ones.

The width of the watery gash in California’s Coast Range had awed even San Francisco’s resident lunatic of post-Civil War years, “Emperor” Joshua Norton. When, in 1869, he ordered a San Francisco Bay bridge be built by his subjects, Norton connected it with Marin County—his “mountain range of Saucilleto [sic].” But he wanted the jump to the north shore made from the Bay’s Goat Island, now Yerba Buena Island, giving the dangerous Golden Gate a wide berth.

The general disbelief that such a difficult engineering problem could be solved was not quite unanimous. Luckily for San Francisco, among those who were undaunted by the project’s immensity were two local Irishmen with political clout. Richard J. Welch, a member of the city’s Board of Supervisors, introduced a resolution in 1918 to authorize a survey of the geological footings of a future bridge. Michael M. O’Shaughnessy, city engineer, asked a colleague, Joseph Baermann Strauss, if he was interested in building a bridge across the breach in the coastal mountains. But first he warned

Strauss, “Everybody says it can’t be done. And it would cost over \$100 million if it could be done.”

Strauss, then forty-eight years old, replied that he thought he could do the job for \$25 to \$35 million. To be on the safe side, the city invited two other prominent bridge engineers to submit plans. One failed to reply; the other priced his design at \$77 million.

Strauss, with the field all to himself, took three years to formally respond. But when he did, it was in the form of a slick, fifteen-page brochure titled *Bridging The Golden Gate*. Co-authored by O’Shaughnessy, the booklet contained a bold but practical plan, complete with a cost estimate of exactly \$17.25 million.

Aesthetically-minded Californians were shocked at the idea of “blocking” the Golden Gate, sure that a bridge would mar, if not destroy, one of the greatest vistas in the world. They were joined by many locals, tax-paying skeptics who distrusted the largesse of politicians and bureaucrats. Finally, the military closed ranks in

A magnificent engineering feat completed fifty years ago this month, California’s Golden Gate Bridge reigns today as America’s leading manmade tourist attraction while serving also as a vital communications link between the San Francisco peninsula and Marin County. This view, looking down on the entrance to San Francisco Bay from atop the bridge’s 746-foot-high south tower, shows nearly the full sweep of the 4,200-foot central span—the longest in the world until completion of the Verrazano Narrows Bridge in 1964.





Modern Pillars of Hercules, the partially completed north and south towers flank the Golden Gate while battleships of the U.S. Pacific fleet steam out of San Francisco Bay in April 1935. The towers and massive central pier for the Bay Bridge—also in the early stages of construction—loom in the distance, between San Francisco and Yerba Buena Island.

opposition, too. Military leaders were apprehensive that the proposed structure would become a hazard to navigation by tall-masted and high-stacked ocean liners and that the U.S. Navy's battleships and aircraft carriers would be denied access to the harbor.

One anti-bridge pamphleteer was seen as a turncoat by his fellow publicists. He was the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce in Sausalito, a town near the proposed bridge's north end. The bayside community

was expected to support a project that was sure to make the town prosper. But Captain William T. Dillon, the chamber's secretary (and this writer's father), opposed the plan. He predicted that the bridge would never be paid off and that it would ruin the unique character of Marin, a lightly-populated, rustic county of great beauty only minutes away by ferryboat from the crowds of bustling San Francisco.*

More than a full decade of such controversy intervened between the presentation of Strauss's plan in the summer of 1921 and groundbreaking for the bridge. Only in 1933 was it safe for the engineer to joke about his bitter "Ten Years War." The debate had been as stormy as the Golden Gate on a wintry day.

**No taxes have ever been levied in the bridge's behalf, and its bonds were paid off in July 1971, but toll fees continue to be levied on vehicles crossing the span.*



But the delay proved to be a godsend. Strauss's first design was an abomination—a low, heavy, squat structure, a sort of strayed Brooklyn Bridge. But worse, it was a hybrid mishmash of cantilever and suspension design, with enough girders and braces to outfit a new Eiffel Tower.

Probably because of the input of Strauss's right-hand man, principal engineer Clifford E. Paine, and the War Department's demands for navigational clearance, the original design was scrapped. In revising his plans, the chief engineer came up with the graceful, sweeping lines of the structure that exists today. Its striking simplicity and superb setting made it immediately recognized as the most beautiful bridge in the world. The soaring steel of the final design was almost unheard of in civil engineering annals. The span actually enhanced, rather than detracted from, the appearance of the strait over which it arched.

OPPPOSITION REMAINED STRONG throughout the 1920s, and neither state nor federal money could be obtained for funding. But the determined proponents won two victories. On December 4, 1928, after board resolutions and ratifying petitions in the counties involved, the Golden Gate Bridge and Highway District was incorporated. On November 4, 1930, a \$35 million bond issue to finance construction was passed by a two-thirds majority vote. Still, these were only battles, if major ones; the war was not yet won. Because of an unfavorable bond market as the Depression began to worsen, it appeared that the project would have to be postponed, perhaps shelved, indefinitely.

The Bridge District directors, representing the voters of most of the Redwood Empire counties—San Francisco, Marin, Sonoma, Napa, Mendocino, and Del Norte—now approached exactly the right person, just as had been done in the case of Strauss. A.P. Giannini



By autumn 1935 workers had linked the north and south towers with twenty-five one-inch wire ropes (opposite), which would serve as foundations for two temporary catwalks. After the footbridges were completed, the six-month task of "spinning" the main suspension cables began: each consisted of 27,572 wires composing 61 strands, which were then formed into a circular cable three feet in diameter. In all, the central cables required 80,000 miles of wire. The central cables, suspension ropes, and accessories together weighed 24,500 tons.

would turn out to be one of the bridge's heroes, like Strauss and Paine. He was the founder and, at that time, the chairman of the board of the Bank of America. The North Beach *Genovese* was as much an adventurous visionary as Strauss. He formed a syndicate, headed by the Bank of America, to purchase the first issue of bridge bonds in the amount of \$3 million. It was this bold act of faith that guaranteed that the bridge would be built.

Although formal groundbreaking ceremonies were not held until February 26, 1933, construction began on January 5. The bridge was built simultaneously with the area's other world-class span, the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. However, proponents of the latter bridge had an easier time financing their project. The Bay Bridge was constructed with state funds and with the blessings of the federal government. In fact, it was a pet project of President Herbert Hoover. Bay Bridge construction began in May 1933, with an official groundbreaking in July. The Bay Bridge was built quickly and opened in November 1936.

Although fans of the Bay bridge like to brag that theirs is the longer, larger, and more costly of the two structures (\$78 million versus \$27 million), it has always languished in the shadow of its more famous, more popular, and more beautiful span to the west. And Bay Bridge boosters who are quick to point out the Golden Gate Bridge's fatal attraction for the suicidal never boast of the cost of their own bridge in workers' lives. During construction of the Bay Bridge, twenty-four men were killed in accidents.

From the very start, the Golden Gate Bridge upstaged its less handsome sister. For the Golden Gate Bridge's groundbreaking some two hundred thousand people swarmed over the Presidio's Crissy Field, the antique airport on the U.S. Army reservation that surrounds Fort Point. The huge mob so scared the 250 carrier pigeons selected to bear news of the event that little boys had to be sent with sticks to drive the cowering birds from their cages. Only one-tenth as many people showed up for the Bay Bridge groundbreaking five months later, even though that occasion starred the nation's new president, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The Golden Gate Bridge went on to become a worldwide symbol of California, the West in general, and of San Francisco in particular. Today it is one of the earth's

engineering marvels and the number one manmade tourist attraction in the United States, topping the likes of Mount Rushmore, Boulder Dam, and the Statue of Liberty.

JOSEPH BAERMANN STRAUSS was the ideal choice to bridge the "impossible" Golden Gate. Only five feet tall, he was short on stature but big on plans and ideas. Strauss was gifted with imagination and foresight as well as the ingenuity of a brilliant engineer. The subject of his graduate thesis, for example, was a hypothetical bridge across the Bering Strait.

But Strauss was not all theory. In a long career he had mastered the nuts and bolts of his chosen profession. He invented both a soda fountain glass-washer and a concrete railroad freight car. He perfected an elastic gate for railway crossings, one that caught endangered autos and sprang them gently but firmly back to safety. He designed a counterweight lift, then used it on a bascule bridge that he built across Petaluma Creek, north of San Francisco, in 1913.

Fortunately for San Francisco, Strauss had respect for both history and aesthetics. His design provided for the preservation of old Fort Winfield Scott (1854-61), usually called Fort Point like the ground beneath it, at a time when both the Army and the municipality were neglecting it. He saved the fort, a copy of Fort Sumter, by lifting the bridge's southside span over the brick fortress with an arch that added beauty to his design.

Strauss disarmed many opponents with the splendid simplicity of his bridge design and the restraint he exercised with its decorative elements. Had the art deco elements of his fluted tower-sheathing or bold lamp standards been orchestrated with a heavy hand, the bridge might be a museum piece today, admired only by nostalgic antiquarians. The engineer proved himself to be an architect and more than a little of the artist. As a result, his monument of high steel is like an immense sculpture gracing the landscape.

Strauss was also a humanitarian, a man of compassion. His concern for the safety of his workers went to extraordinary lengths. Part of the enduring mythology of the engineering profession, circa 1930, was the belief that each million dollars of heavy construction demanded a toll of one human life. Strauss said publicly that he would be damned if he would forfeit the lives of thirty-five workers. He urged workers to wear safety belts, although such measures were not always feasible since they restricted movement so much. He outfitted his men in football-helmet-like hard hats, of leather initially, a "first" for major building projects in this country. He ordered riveters inside the cells of the bridge's towers to wear both goggles and respirators. He had the goggles of the "bridge monkeys" on the tower tops tinted to prevent a form of snow blindness caused by the glare of the sun reflecting off of low fog banks. And he staffed a medical clinic on the construction pier with a doctor and nurses. When Strauss suspected that the bridge paint was giving his men lead poisoning and

blood tests proved him right, he switched from red lead to iron oxide paint.

Strauss fired men who drank on duty and those who stunted or showed off recklessly on the job. He worked up a special diet to help prevent vertigo and he prescribed sauerkraut juice as a cure for a malady especially prevalent on Monday mornings—hangovers.

The most important of Strauss's so-called safety extravagances (and he was criticized for these "excesses") was a safety net that he ordered strung under the entire length of the bridge and out ten feet on each side. This web of heavy-duty 7/8-inch manila hemp cost him somewhere between \$82,000, his own conservative estimate, and the \$130,000 sum quoted by his critics.

The net paid off. Its mere presence reassured his laborers and made safety belts virtually unnecessary. The safety net permitted the men to work faster, reassuring them that one false step would not launch them into space and eternity. Whereas the Bay Bridge lost two dozen workers during its construction, Strauss's project lost but one man during forty-four (out of a total of fifty-two) months of work. Within three months of the bridge opening, he still had lost only one man, killed ashore by a toppling derrick. Meanwhile, nineteen men fell into the net. They formed an elitist "Half-way to Hell" club to celebrate their narrow escapes.

STRAUSS'S BRIDGE was 8,981 feet long with 8,450 feet between abutments and 6,450 feet of it in suspension. Twin side spans of 1,125 feet converged on a critical 4,200-foot mid span. This main span, a flattened arch with 220 feet of clearance (the height of a nineteen-story building) above low water, was the longest in the world until the Verrazano Narrows Bridge outstretched it by only sixty feet in 1964.

Strauss slung his bridge deck on two 7,650-foot-long suspension cables riding on cast-steel "saddles" atop two cellular steel towers. Taller than any buildings on the West Coast, the twin towers each weighed forty-four million pounds and soared 746 feet into the sky, the height of a sixty-five-story skyscraper. The ends of the cables, each with a tensile strength of two hundred million pounds, were splayed out and attached to eye bars embedded deep in concrete anchorages at each end of the span.

The bridge was designed to expand and contract to accommodate changing conditions. The center span could shrink and rise on cold days by 5.8 feet and could sag on hot days by a good 10.8 feet. More important, the deck could safely sway twenty-one feet out of plumb if hit broadside by a one-hundred-mile-an-hour wind. Such a wind was highly unlikely, but carpenter Francis Baptiste recalled having to make cages for riveters after the tool shed and dynamite shack, both unanchored by cables, were blown away by one of the Gate's blustery westerlies.

Even an engineering genius like Strauss could not design a suspension bridge long enough to leap the entire Golden Gate with both towers on dry land. Although he

After suspender cables were hung from the main cables, workers began placing the huge trusses for the roadway. In this photograph, made in October 1936, Joseph Strauss' famous safety net can be seen below the framework; by project's end nineteen workers would owe their lives to the \$80,000 web. Fabrication of the roadway truss panels proceeded rapidly, and by mid-November 1936 the north and south sections were joined at midspan. The decades-long dream of bridging the Golden Gate was finally a reality.

rooted his North Tower (built first) in a cofferdam at the water's edge of Lime Point, his tower on the San Francisco side was placed in sixty-five feet of water. The South Tower thus became the critical keystone that held the entire "impossible" bridge together, preventing it from tumbling into a pile of 83,000 tons of steel, 80,000 miles of wire cable, and 389,000 cubic yards of concrete.

Strauss pored over maps and charts and found that a reef of rock, underwater during all tides, jutted out from Fort Point. The chief engineer's daring idea was to sink the pier of the San Francisco tower at the deepwater edge of this rocky shoal. The divers would have to fight chill winds and fog on the choppy surface, and treacherous currents and tides swirling around the jagged rocks on the bottom.

To carry men and materials to the tower site, Strauss built a sturdy wooden pier on pilings. The 1,125-foot-long trestle ended at a point where the tides rushed in and out at 6.5 knots. One night a ship blundered into the structure and tore away three hundred feet of it. Two storms followed and carried away five hundred feet more. By raising its deck above the biggest combers, Strauss later improved the pier so that it lasted four more years without mishap.

The chief engineer had planned to lay the underpinnings of the South Tower with a pneumatic (compressed air) caisson. This was an immense box with sides of heavy timbers, holding a honeycomb of steel cylinders. The device would slowly be sunk inside a protecting fender of piles by pouring concrete around the cylinders. Sandhogs would then raise the walls and cylinder heads to keep them always above the water line. Once the caisson was on the bottom, clamshell buckets would be dropped down the tubes to remove the trapped mud. The great chamber's bottom, including the cylinders, would then be filled with concrete to form the pier's base on bedrock.

The caisson was floated inside the fender through a gap left for that purpose, but gale winds turned it into a battering ram that crashed against the wall of the enclosure. A disgusted Strauss hauled it out to sea and sank it. With typical ingenuity, Strauss now converted the fender into an integral part of the pier by pouring concrete inside its walls to make a protective ring. By pumping out the moat inside he was able to build his South Tower "in the dry," although its base was 110 feet below the mean low water line.





"Pedestrian Day"—May 27, 1937—was the first of two gala celebrations marking completion of the \$25 million, four-year project. A fog that enveloped the Golden Gate during much of the day failed to dampen the spirits of some 200,000 people who crossed the bridge on foot. In this view from the south tower, the causeway used during construction of the tower pier is partially visible, as is Civil-War-era Fort Point.

It took two years, seven million dollars, and 43,000 tons of prefabricated steel sections to erect the towers on the two piers. The highrises easily withstood the earthquake tremors that soon tested them, although tower workers like Al "Frenchy" Gales feared they would be pitched "into the drink" by the violent seismic swaying.

THE PAINSTAKING JOB of spinning the cables began on August 2, 1935, when a barge was tugged across the channel to unreel the steel footwalk "ropes." These were then hoisted to their proper position—duplicating the sag of the future suspension cables—by hoisting ropes on the towers. Soon wire was being fed to giant spinning wheels that met halfway across the "Gate" to exchange bights, or loops, of the wire. The spinning of these, the largest cables in history—each one $36\frac{3}{8}$ inches in diameter and composed of 27,572 galvanized wires the size of a lead pencil, gathered into sixty-one strands—was carefully supervised by men on catwalks. They had to adjust the slack as wires stretched or contracted with temperature fluctuations.

Roadway work, in comparison, was relative child's play, and by February 17, 1937, the end was in easy sight. But on that day the gods chose to punish Strauss for his hubris, his self-satisfaction at having cheated Death of its customary toll by instituting such precautions as the safety net, respirators, and goggles.

A work crew was hand-wincing a traveling scaffold under the deck. The men were yanking away plank forms from the roadway's hardened concrete and dropping them into the net to be collected and later hauled away. Suddenly, the men heard the chilling sound of ripping metal—the steel wheel brackets of the thirty-by-sixty-foot platform were tearing loose. The next sounds were the shrieks and screams of terrified men as the tension scaffold plummeted into the net, taking the workmen with it. (Two workers managed to hang onto the deck. After they were rescued, they claimed that they had left their fingerprints forever in the cold steel.)

The great hempen strands groaned in protest—then parted. Slowly, but with a thunderous sound, the net, with its cargo of men, lumber, and scaffolding, pulled away from the bridge. Foreman Evan "Slim" Lambert never forgot the sight. "It was like a slow-motion picture," he later recalled.

A dozen men rode the net for 220 feet to the whitecaps of the Golden Gate. Most of those who survived

A 50th Anniversary Celebration

Fiftieth anniversary festivities for the Golden Gate Bridge, scheduled for Sunday, May 24, promise to be nearly as gala as the opening celebrations were in 1937. As this magazine went to press, plans under consideration included closing the bridge to auto traffic early on Sunday morning for a mass pedestrian crossing. Other activities sponsored by the Friends of the Golden Gate Bridge include a concert at nearby Crissy Field in the San Francisco Presidio; bridge overflights by vintage aircraft; a parade of naval vessels and period ships under the span; and a spectacular evening fireworks display. Perhaps most memorable, however, will be the ceremonial lighting of a new permanent illumination system that will transform the bridge's nighttime appearance.

the fall itself and the battering from the loose boards were entangled in the net and drowned as fate, with fine irony, turned Strauss's lifesaving device into a death-trap. Only two men escaped immediate death and one of them later succumbed to his injuries.

Lambert, the foreman, was the sole survivor of the terrible accident. Here was a real hero, a man who, with his courage, matched the mental and moral strength of Strauss and Paine. Although bloodied in his fall, he tried valiantly to save his comrades.

Lambert first swam toward a pair of booted feet in the waves, but they disappeared under the surface. He then found Fred Dummatzen and gave him a hand. When a Fisherman's Wharf crab boat skipper, Mario Manzella, hauled Lambert aboard his Monterey clipper twenty minutes later, Lambert was still holding Dummatzen so that his head was safely above water. But Dummatzen was dead.

At the hospital, Lambert grieved for the men of his crew whom he had failed to save. "I saw them die all around me, and I couldn't do anything about it," he lamented. Doctors x-rayed Lambert only below the neck and found that he had suffered a broken shoulder and several ribs. He went back to work two months later—unaware that he had broken neck vertebrae, too.

ASADDENED STRAUSS finished his task on time and well under his revised budget of \$27,165,000. May 27, 1937, was a great day, the date of the grandest bridge-opening in history. Some two hundred thousand people walked over "their" bridge. Bay Area residents who had spent four years watching it rise felt almost as possessive of the so-called "symphony in steel" as the proud ironworkers who had built it. Never had a span so completely seized the public's imagination. On May 28 the bridge was opened to auto traffic to culminate a week-long fiesta during which citizens decked them-



At opening-day ceremonies (right), designer-builder Strauss had his fedora replaced by a Stetson, handed to him by a cowgirl queen of the Golden Gate Bridge Fiesta.

selves in the garb of Spanish dons, Gold Rush 49ers, or the Stetsons of Wild West cowboys.

An official (but instantly forgettable) song was written, and Strauss composed a poem about the fulfillment of his long-held vision. Strauss was a great engineer but a poor poet. His lyric was almost doggerel, mundane, if not banal, poetry. But because the composer was the bridge's designer and builder, "The Mighty Task Is Done" possesses a kind of homely poetic power.

The first two stanzas of Strauss's poem salute the mountain-high bridge linking shore with shore, its titan piers gripping the ocean floor, and its towers—

COURTESY OF THE REDWOOD EMPIRE ASSOCIATION





Escorted by a vanguard of motorcycle patrolmen (above), cars carrying officials and dignitaries lead the way across the new Golden Gate Bridge on the first day of motor traffic—May 28, 1937.

“resplendent in the Western sun”—piercing the sky. The third verse rather prettily expresses an engineer’s pride in conquering the elements—“Here Nature, free since time began, Yields to the restless moods of man, Accepts his bonds of steel.”

Strauss’s poem chides his opponents, who had damned his project with “a thousand sneers,” and pays homage to the valiant men under his direction. Not just the daredevil, acrobatic iron workers teetering in space, balancing on girders, braces, and angle irons, and not just the bronze-helmeted divers buffeted about the Golden Gate’s bottom. He forgets no one, recognizing

riveters, the caisson’s frustrated sandhogs, cable reelers, union scale (dollar-an-hour) carpenters, ordinary concrete men of the deck, and the lowly (but on-high) painters who twisted in the wind on bosun’s chairs.

The engineer-poet wrote of these sunburned, fog-chilled workers and their “honored cause, nobly fought; That which they so bravely wrought, Now glorifies their deed.” He concluded his celebratory ode by offering a paen to the bridge as a now-living entity, “a lithe, fine form,” which, he prophesied, would “fear not war, nor time, For Fate has meant it so.” ★

Richard Dillon is the author of several books on the American West, including High Steel, the definitive pictorial history of San Francisco’s Golden Gate and Oakland Bay bridges. He resides a few miles from the Golden Gate Bridge in California’s Marin County, and during his youth was one of the 200,000 celebrants who walked across the bridge at its grand opening fifty years ago this month.

Joyce Kilmer: Soldier and Poet

by Brian McGinty

POETRY AND SOLDIERY seem to have little in common. If it is the poet's task to celebrate the fragile beauty of life, it is oftentimes the bitter duty of the soldier to crush out life on the battlefield.

Joyce Kilmer, one of America's most popular poets in the years just preceding World War I, saw no conflict between his roles as poet and soldier. Before he left to fight in France in 1917, Kilmer lauded the proud traditions of the warrior-poets of the ages, writing:

*When you say of the making of ballads and songs
that it is a woman's work,*

*You forget all the fighting poets that have been
in every land.*

*There was Byron, who left all his lady-loves,
to fight against the Turk,*

*And David, the singing king of the Jews, who was
born with a sword in his hand.*

Kilmer is best remembered today as the author of "Trees," an extremely durable verse that has been printed, recited, and even sung (to music supplied by the poet's mother, Annie Kilburn Kilmer) millions of times since it was published more than seventy years ago. But "Trees" is not a fair measure of Kilmer's talent as a poet. It is a pretty, though not very substantial verse whose virtues (simplicity and sincerity) are almost equally balanced by its faults (awkward metaphors and oversweet sentimentality). Yet "Trees" catapulted Kilmer to fame when it appeared in the prestigious journal *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, in August 1913, and did much to help him sell his more cogent poems and essays. Almost overnight, the poem's memorable first line, "I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree," and its equally notable concluding line, "Poems are made by fools like me, but only God can make a tree," were reprinted in magazines and newspapers all over the country. For better or worse, "Trees" became a permanent fixture in popular American literature.

Although still a young man when he went off to war in 1917, Kilmer was mature enough to look back on his already large body of work and attempt to measure its worth. He told an editor that everything he wrote before "Pennies" (1914) was "worthless." "I want all of

my poems written before that," he added, "to be forgotten." But the world has refused to forget "Trees" or the bright, shining poet who produced it.

He was born Alfred Joyce Kilmer in New Brunswick, New Jersey, on December 6, 1886, the son of a chemistry professor and a minor writer and composer. He attended Rutgers College and then Columbia University, graduating in 1908. Almost immediately afterward he married Aline Murray and began to raise a family. After a year of teaching Latin in a New Jersey high school, Kilmer and his family left for New York, where he was determined to become a "man of letters."

In New York, Kilmer worked at various jobs—sales clerk in a bookstore, editor of a magazine for horsemen, definition writer for a dictionary publisher—before reaching his stride as a popular poet and journalist for some of the city's best periodicals: the *Churchman*, the *Nation*, *Literary Digest*, and the *New York Times*. He was the principal critic for the *New York Times Review of Books* when "Trees" burst on the public consciousness in 1913.

Kilmer's better work was influenced by his strong religious beliefs (in 1913, both he and his wife became converts to Roman Catholicism) and his fondness for Irish lore and traditions. He joked that he was half Irish—although he knew that his ancestors were mostly English and German—and he avidly read the great works of Irish literature. His first book of poems, *Summer of Love*, was influenced by the Celtic revival in Irish literature.

Kilmer had taken little interest in World War I before news of the sinking of the *Lusitania* spread across the country in 1915. Then, outraged by what he and millions of other Americans perceived as an act of German treachery, he wrote an indignant poem, "The White Ships and the Red," which was widely read and admired. After President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germany in April 1917, Kilmer volunteered for combat duty. He entered the Columbia Officers' Training Corps, then enlisted as a private in the New York National Guard. Eventually he transferred to the 69th (later the 165th) Infantry of the all-volunteer Rainbow Division of the American

BROWN BROTHERS, STERLING, PENNSYLVANIA



Expeditionary Force, a regiment that included many Irish and Irish-Americans among its members.

The poet had planned to write a history of the 69th, but his battlefield experiences lessened his enthusiasm for the project. Instead, he wrote of his comrades' bravery in a poem he called "Rouge Bouquet," after a wood in which many of them were killed:

*There is on earth no worthier grave
To hold the bodies of the brave
Than this place of pain and pride
Where they nobly fought and nobly died.*

In one of his last letters from France, Kilmer told a priest that he had discovered that "writing is not the tremendously important thing I once considered it" and promised that, when the priest next saw him, he would be "less a bookman" and "more, I hope, a man."

But the priest never saw the poet-soldier again. On July 30, 1918, Kilmer volunteered to lead a scouting patrol into the treacherous "No Man's Land" that separated the German and American armies. When, after a couple of hours, comrades from his battalion caught up with him, they found him lying motionless, bent over a little ridge, a bullet through his brain. Kilmer was buried where he fell, at the edge of a wood close to the River Ourcq, northeast of Paris. It was a fitting end for a man who died—as he lived—dedicated to his ideals.

When news of the thirty-one-year-old poet's death reached the United States, it was regarded as a great loss to American literature. Many remembered him only as the author of "Trees." A few others recalled him as an extraordinarily gifted young poet who chose to take his place among the warrior-poets of the ages—a poet who saluted his valorous fellow-soldiers by writing in "Rouge Bouquet":

*Comrades true, born anew, peace to you!
Your souls shall be where the heroes are
And your memory shine like the morning-star. ★*

Brian McGinty, a frequent contributor to American History Illustrated, is a California attorney and writer.

Amelia Earhart

Continued from page 19

dered navigation during the long night. When dawn finally arrived, revealing only an empty ocean, the fliers thought they had overshot Howland in the night and began circling. Goerner theorizes that the Electra was actually hundreds of miles short of its destination because of an undetected headwind.

Finally, with only two hours of fuel left, Earhart turned back toward the British-controlled Gilbert Islands, contends Goerner. But because of the navigational error, she flew instead to the Japanese-controlled Marshalls, about 650 miles northwest of Howland.

For several days after crash-landing in shallow water by an atoll, Earhart radioed for help. Then, according to Goerner, the Electra's waning battery cut the crew off from the rest of the world.

By then the Americans were searching for the fliers, but they could not get permission from the Japanese to cover the Mandated Islands. Nor were they willing to search there without permission; such audacity might inflame the militaristic Japanese (who had already taken on the Chinese), and the isolationist United States abhorred the thought of a Pacific war. The Japanese eventually took the downed fliers to Saipan and imprisoned them as spies, according to Goerner's theory. Both prisoners subsequently died, either due to sickness or by execution.

Because Earhart and Noonan were aware of illegal military activities in the Mandated Islands, the Japanese could not return them to the United States, says the broadcaster. He speculates that U.S. government authorities suspected the fliers' fate in 1937 and subsequently confirmed it after the Saipan invasion in 1944. President Roosevelt declined to make a public announcement about the discovery because he was then running for re-election in a difficult campaign and wanted to avoid Republican criticism for failing to rescue the fliers seven years earlier, according to Goerner. When Roosevelt died, President Harry Truman saw no immediate political advantage in enlightening the country.

In the early 1950s, the Central Intelligence Agency built secret training facilities on Saipan and therefore wanted to prevent any publicity that might send snoop-ing newsmen to the island in search of additional Earhart evidence. After the CIA pulled out ten years later, says Goerner, no valid reason remained for maintaining the classified status on Earhart. But no one in authority was willing to reveal the truth about the fate of Earhart and Noonan.

The Japanese, Goerner continues, were unwilling to reveal the truth because they would have had to give a reason for their holding Earhart and Noonan; to this day Japan denies having used the Mandated Islands counter to the League of Nations guidelines.

Goerner published these conclusions in his 1966 book, *The Search for Amelia Earhart*, which *Reader's Digest* presented as a feature condensation in 1967.

GOERNER'S BOOK inspired a group of Cleveland-area men to make two expeditions to Saipan, one in 1967 and the second in 1968. One member recalled having seen a twin-engine airplane in a canyon on the island during his military service there in 1946. The group found pieces of the aircraft, which an analysis determined to be of probable American origin. They also interviewed residents who remembered the two prewar Caucasian aviators. One islander claimed to have witnessed the beheading of the male and showed the grave to the Cleveland group. The site, apparently close to Goerner's excavations, yielded only a few bone fragments, as if remains had already been removed.

After examining the remains, Ohio State University anthropologist Raymond S. Baby told the group most of the fragments were probably from a Caucasian woman in young middle age but that one belonged to a male.

Amelia Earhart: The Final Story [1985], is yet another book to spring from an investigation of the suspected Japanese involvement in the Earhart mystery. Realizing that his predecessors had concentrated on Saipan, author Vincent Loomis made trips to the Marshall Islands and Japan as well to gather new information. After gaining the trust of the hesitant Marshallese, Loomis heard stories about a white man and woman who had crash-landed a twin-engine airplane in the Marshalls by Barre Island in Mili Atoll before the war. Some islanders claimed to have known eyewitnesses to the incident.

Most agreed the white people had been captured by the Japanese and transported elsewhere in the Pacific (perhaps to Saipan in a seaplane that Josephine Blanco Akiyama thought "crash-landed" in Tanapag Harbor). A Japanese-born store owner, who had been a medical corpsman before and during the war, claimed to have been summoned aboard a Japanese ship at Jaluit in 1937 to treat the injuries of a white aviator. A white female aviator had been nearby on the ship, he said. He added that their airplane had been at the stern still in the canvas sling that had plucked it from the water.

In Japan, Loomis examined documents indicating that although the Japanese had agreed in 1937 to search the Mandated Islands for the Electra, they had not done so. He inferred that the Japanese had already picked up Earhart and Noonan.

Other research turned up a recorded radio message that explained why the USS *Ontario* had never heard from Earhart: without informing the ship, Earhart apparently deviated north of a direct line between Lae and Howland to use the mining lights on Nauru Island as a checkpoint. Nauru lay farther along the route than the *Ontario* and therefore would have been a more valuable checkpoint despite the detour. Listening on his short-wave receiver, the Nauru chief of police at the time heard Earhart report the island's lights in sight. That revelation would seem to refute Goerner's theory that

An Earhart Mystery Reader

Daughter of the Sky by Paul L. Briand Jr. (*Duell, Sloan and Pierce, New York, 1960*).

Examines Josephine Blanco Akiyama's story of having seen two white aviators resembling Earhart and Noonan on Saipan before the war.

The Search for Amelia Earhart by Fred Goerner (*Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1966*).

Details the author's investigation into the Earhart mystery, including his four trips to Saipan. Concludes that Earhart and Noonan were on a spy mission, made a forced landing in the Marshall Islands, were taken prisoners by the Japanese, and died in captivity on Saipan.

Amelia Earhart Lives by Joe Klaas (*McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1970*).

Claims that Earhart secretly returned to the United States and lived under an alias.

Amelia Earhart: The Final Story by Vincent Loomis (*Random House, New York, 1985*).

Like Fred Goerner, the author visited the Pacific islands and interviewed natives claiming to have seen Earhart and Noonan. He reaches many of the same conclusions as Goerner but believes the fliers' only intent was to reach Howland Island.

Eyewitness: The Amelia Earhart Incident by Thomas E. Devine with Richard M. Daley (*Renaissance House, Frederick, Colorado, 1987*).

An army sergeant on Saipan following its invasion in 1944, co-author Devine maintains that he saw Amelia Earhart's plane at a Japanese airfield and its subsequent destruction by order of the U.S. Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal. He claims also to have been shown the gravesite of Earhart and Noonan by a native woman.

the Electra turned north toward Truk after takeoff.

Loomis adds testimony to previous assertions that Earhart, for whom radio navigation was a new art, had not learned how to use the Electra's equipment properly. In fact, while still in the United States, she had ordered a critical 250-foot trailing antenna removed from the airplane because she found it tedious to reel in and out. The antenna would have made communication with the *Itasca* much easier. Moreover, radio frequency instructions sent by Earhart to the Coast Guard cutter prior to the Howland flight had been vague and confusing, hindering the subsequent communications.

Noonan's own navigational abilities on July 2 may have been shaky, according to Loomis; although a highly skilled navigator with trans-Pacific experience, Noonan was an alcoholic who had lost his job with Pan American Airways because of his habit. Publicity from the around-the-world flight was to have helped him start a navigation school and make a comeback. But the bottle continued to win some battles, and at Lae he stepped aboard the Electra with a bad hangover, claims Loomis.

Like Goerner, Loomis conjectures that the airplane

came down on Mili Atoll in the Marshalls. But Loomis believes the only purpose of the flight was to reach Howland. Computer analysis indicates that when the crew members thought they were in the vicinity of the island they were actually far to the north, says Loomis. That is why their retreat brought them into the Marshalls rather than the Gilberts.

WHILE GOERNER AND LOOMIS make a strong case on circumstantial evidence for a crash-landing in the Marshalls and the subsequent capture of Earhart and Noonan by the Japanese, there are a few weak points in their arguments. For instance, the Saipanese and Marshallese who provided testimony reached into memories that had been fading for twenty to forty years or longer. There may have been some mingling of fact and fiction. Also, much of the testimony was based on rumor or secondhand information. The Pacific natives may simply have told the interviewers what they wanted to hear, perhaps hoping for monetary rewards. And in 1949, the United States asked Japan for information regarding the missing fliers. (The Japanese said they knew nothing.) If, after the Saipan invasion, the United States had learned the fate of Earhart and Noonan there would have been no reason to do this.

The skeptic yearns for hard evidence and wants to hear verbal confirmation from a reliable source. Goerner claims that the esteemed Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, commander of U.S. naval forces in the Pacific during World War II, told him that the Electra had come down in the Marshalls. But Nimitz died in 1966, before the publication of Goerner's book and the questioning by reporters that would have inevitably followed. There cannot be many such sources left.

Nonetheless, attempts to add new information to the mystery continue. *Amelia Earhart: The Final Story* received excellent reviews, but it may not, in fact, be the final story. *Eyewitness: The Amelia Earhart Incident* by Thomas E. Devine with Richard M. Daley, should be in bookstores by July 1987. A former Army sergeant who had served on Saipan during 1944-45, Devine had participated in Goerner's investigation. In this book he claims to have witnessed the burning of Earhart's Electra NR10620 on the island as ordered by the United States Secretary of the Navy. Devine also says he can locate the gravesite of Earhart and Noonan.

If Earhart and Noonan were indeed taken prisoner instead of being lost at sea, the faint possibility still exists—despite the passage of half a century—that documentable wreckage, human remains, photographs, government records, or even journals written by the fliers will yet be found, finally providing verifiable conclusions regarding their fate. In the meantime, the disappearance of Amelia Earhart remains aviation's most perplexing and intriguing mystery. ★

Gerry Bruder is a Seattle-based free-lance writer and commercial seaplane pilot. He recently completed his first book, Siren in the Wilderness, an account of his experiences as a bush pilot in Alaska.

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Saturday, November 7 — We'll meet on board Clipper Cruise Line's *Newport Clipper*, where you'll get acquainted with our Great Journeys host. After settling in, we'll visit Savannah Exposition with the Great Museum Hall and the Seige of Savannah Theater. Following a special cocktail reception for our party, we'll reboard for dinner, our first of many memorable feasts.

Sunday, November 8 — We'll relax today as we cruise the Intracoastal Waterway, gaining a rare glimpse of the fascinating low country and sea islands. And in early evening we'll arrive at lovely St. Simon's Island. On this rich coast Audubon studied the native wildlife and Aaron Burr sought refuge after his famous duel with Alexander Hamilton. This evening is free for exploration on shore.

Monday, November 9 — St. Simon's Island has flown the flags of the Spanish, French, British, the Confederate States and the United States — and features of each culture remain visible to this day. As a Confederate territory the island's grand resort atmosphere was ravaged when Sherman's Army razed the great estates. Today it thrives as a luxury resort once again. This morning we'll take a specially-arranged tour of the island, and this afternoon we'll be free to visit as we wish.

Tuesday, November 10 — During a leisurely day we sail north to Beaufort, one of the best natural harbors on the coast and, in former times, the host city to fortunes made in cotton and indigo. The voyage takes us over quiet seas, past weathered fishing settlements and old plantation homes. After arriving in early evening, we'll brush up on our history with a special presentation.

Wednesday, November 11 — This morning we'll take a walking tour of historic Beaufort and explore one of America's best-preserved antebellum communities. We'll see Georgian and Greek Revival homes, homes made of tabby (the product of crushed oyster shells) and mansions alive with magnolia and wisteria. Then at noon we'll embark for Charleston, where we'll arrive in early evening.

Thursday, November 12 — By motorcoach, we travel west along the Ashley River to visit Drayton Hall, and Middleton place, whose grand terraces, walkways, plantings and lakes constitute the oldest landscaped gardens in America. This afternoon we'll take a walking tour of Charleston viewing its 18th and 19th century homes and historic churches. The rest of the afternoon and evening are free for further strolling and shopping in the city's restored historic Marketplace.

Friday, November 13 — You'll arise this morning on course for Hilton Head, where our yacht sets anchor in early afternoon. This resort community has twelve miles of beaches and three nature preserves. We'll have a special get-together this afternoon as we enjoy our last evening aboard.

Saturday, November 14 — The return leg on our final morning lands us in Savannah early. Your Great Journeys host will be on hand to assist with transfer to the airport or additional accommodations if you've decided to explore this enchanting city further.

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"Her accomplishments combine to place her in spirit with the great pioneering women to whom every generation of Americans has looked up with admiration." So spoke President Herbert Hoover of pilot Amelia Earhart when in 1932 he presented her with the National Geographic Society's special gold medal for her solo transatlantic flight, the first by a woman. Earhart's career of aviation "firsts" continued until 1937 when, during an around-the-world flight attempt, she, navigator Fred Noonan, and their plane disappeared in the South Pacific. Theories abound as to the fate of the famous aviatrix; an article on Earhart and the mystery of her last flight appears in this issue.